

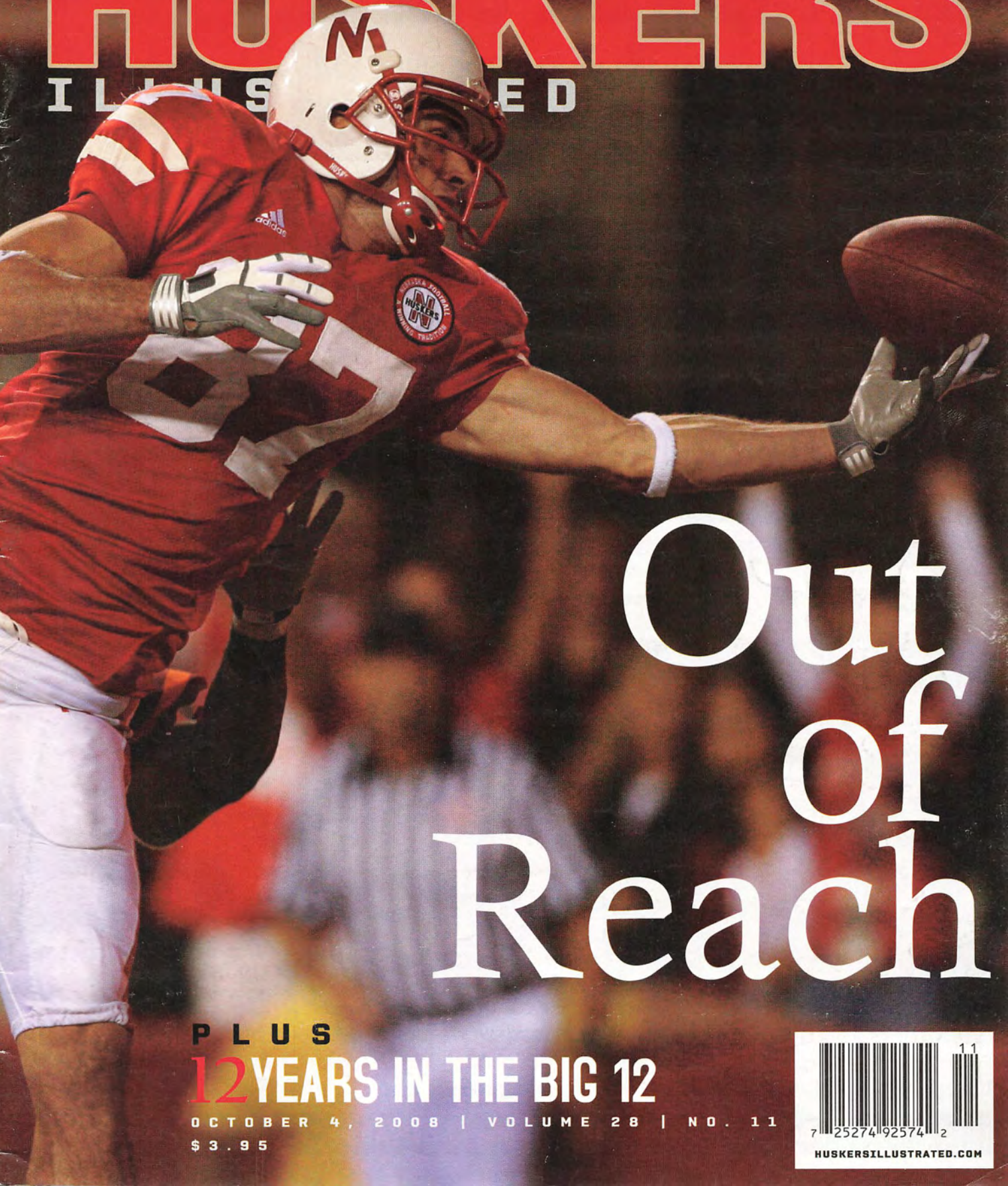
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COLUMNS

4 FROM THE EDITOR by Aaron Babcock
Finding Positives

11 THE BIG 12 BEAT by Curt McKeever
Missouri's Daniels improves his game

38 THE FINAL WORD by Mike Babcock
Mistakes can be corrected, attitude can't

SPECIAL FEATURES

11 HOMETOWN HERO

13 BEHIND THE SCENES WITH MATT PENLAND

13 CATCHING UP WITH BILL BOBBORA

26 MAJOR CULBERT AT HOME WHEN ON STAGE

DON'T MISS

6 2MINUTE DRILL

12 10 QUESTIONS

14 RECRUITING

17 GAME COVERAGE

23 PREDICTIONS

24 GAME PREVIEW

30 AROUND THE HORN

32 VOLLEYBALL

36 FROM THE ARCHIVES

37 CROSSWORD

NEXT ISSUE

The Missouri Recap/Texas Tech preview will be mailed on Monday, Oct. 6.
Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

HUSKERS

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ON THE COVER

The Huskers late rally fell just out of reach as Virginia Tech handed Nebraska its first loss, 35-30. Nate Swift just missed a two-point conversion but returned a punt 88-yards in the fourth quarter.

Photo by Scott Bruhn



FINDING POSITIVES

Despite mistakes, Huskers show character in loss



SO HOW DO YOU FIND positives in Nebraska's 35-30 loss to Virginia Tech?

How do you find positives in a game where the Huskers didn't execute, couldn't run the ball, missed tackles and admittedly made coaching mistakes?

Believe it or not, there are several positives to take away from Saturday's loss.

First of all, Husker fans should have known this year was not going to be an overnight fix. So it shouldn't have been a surprise to see such a stiff test from Virginia Tech – a team that may have been just a couple of plays away from entering the game as a top 10 team.

What was a surprise, was having a chance to win the game in the closing seconds despite making numerous mistakes throughout the game.

This can be attributed to the team's attitude and heart. Effort has not been an issue with these players. Last year's team would not have fought back after trailing 28-10.

Instead, Nebraska found a way to make plays. Nate Swift made the biggest – an 88-yard punt return, to jump-start a Husker rally. This Nebraska team plays with emotion that hasn't been seen in a number of years. Unfortunately, that same moxy also led to three personal fouls in less than a two-minute stretch, which essentially sealed the Husker loss.

The silver lining is that Nebraska can use

those plays and the loss to its advantage.

"It will help us if we learn from our mistakes," Pelini said after the game.

The Huskers continue to be a work in progress and they will have every ounce of their character tested over the next two games – contests that will likely include a pair of top 10 foes.

It's unfortunate that with the Missouri Tigers steam rolling into town, the Huskers picked an inconvenient time to kill any momentum they had built through the first three games.

The momentum stalled on a night when Nebraska appeared to have so many things going in its favor. Playing under the lights in front of a rowdy, record number of fans, the largest crowd in school history (85,831) seemed ready to will the Big Red to victory.

But while the momentum may have stalled against Virginia Tech, an upset over Missouri would do more than change that.

Unlikely?

Maybe, but not impossible.

The college football landscape has proved that anything can happen – just ask No. 1 USC, No. 3 Georgia, No. 4 Florida or No. 9 Wisconsin which all lost this week. There is no such thing as a "gimme" in college football any more. **N**

Send us your comments or story ideas to huskersillustrated@gmail.com.

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Big Red Mailbag

SEND US YOUR LETTERS!! Huskers Illustrated loves to hear from its readers. Have an opinion to share about a story in this issue? Send us a letter. Have an opinion about the Huskers? Drop us a line. Want to share a photo from your last Husker game? We'll take it. **IF WE PRINT YOUR LETTER, WE'LL SEND YOU A SPECIAL HUSKER GIFT!** Send digital photos and letters to huskersillustrated@gmail.com and your regular snapshots and letters to HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED, 7755 S. 23rd St., Lincoln, NE 68512.



FAN OF THE MAILBAG

Love the new look of the Huskers Illustrated magazine and love the fact that you brought back the mailbag section. I always did enjoy hearing what other Husker fans had to say, so this is a welcome addition to a top notch magazine. So far I like everything I have seen in my last three issues and the only things I would like to see you print in some future issues is a short bio on the coaches and Huskers in the NFL. Living

in Kentucky, you are one of the few sources I have for my Huskers Craze and I rely on you to keep me fed. Thanks and keep up the excellent job.

Dan Koleski Sr.

Louisville, KY

HOMETOWN HEROES

As a first time reader of Huskers Illustrated – I'm impressed! As a true Midwesterner, it's absolutely wonderful to get some BIG RED

news out this way — and I'm not talking about the Utes! Ha!

The Hometown Heroes article (on Matthew May/Imperial, NE) and the Recruiting Notebook were two of my favorites! It's nice to read about "where they come from" and the normalcy of

lives they led before hitting fame and becoming a Husker!

Keep up the great work and I look forward to each and every upcoming issue! GO HUSKERS!!

Angie L.

Layton, Utah

Cornhead Corner

definition: CORNHEAD, corn-head – noun

1. a person with an extreme and often unusual enthusiasm or zeal for the University of Nebraska Cornhusker athletic program. Side effects may manifest in abnormal collections of Husker memorabilia, obsessive desires to attend Nebraska sporting events and paranoid delusions that every season should result in a national championship. This compulsive behavior can be contagious and is often a serious irritant for fans of the University of Missouri or Colorado.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DAILY NEBRASKAN

DOUG WYMORE

takes care of Husker fans. Many times it's their final wish.

Wymore is the owner of Fuselman-Wymore-Marshall Funeral Home in Syracuse, Neb., and has been in the business since 1979.

About 12 years ago, Wymore wanted to offer his clients custom, but tasteful, caskets. So he had several custom caskets made in Husker Red and made them available in three different price points, ranging from \$2,000 to \$3,500.

A season ticket holder since 1985, Wymore said the caskets have been very well received.

"The people that have selected the caskets, they loved every bit of it," Wymore said.

One former athletic department employee even insisted that everyone was to wear red at her funeral. "Even the funeral directors were required to wear red ties, and we did. Everybody had a chuckle out of it and it was fun, and that's the way she wanted it."

Wymore admitted a red casket isn't for everyone.

"It does take that special person," Wymore said. "But they're out there."

ARE YOU A CORNHEAD? Send us your story along with a photo to huskersillustrated@gmail.com and you may be featured in an upcoming issue of Huskers Illustrated.

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MARLON LUCKY



LUCKY STARS?

In retrospect, coming to Nebraska as a five-star recruit did affect **MARLON LUCKY**, though probably not in the way one might think.

"If you come in with a straight head and you do what the coaches ask you to do, five stars doesn't really mean anything," the senior I-back said one day last spring. "Just don't come in with a big head. I really kept it cool."

Even so, he admitted he felt pressure to meet fan expectations. Because of the five-star ranking, fans are "thinking you're the guy, you're going to do all this. You can't let that get to you. That's one thing I didn't do," he said.

Lucky was one of two five-star recruits in former coach Bill Callahan's highest-ranked class in 2005. Junior college transfer Zack

Bowman was the other.

Lucky's numbers at North Hollywood (Calif.) High School were outstanding. But he wasn't a player on a video game, capable of producing such numbers on demand. Yet that's what fans expected because of the stars next to his name.

And that's how he judged himself initially. "I had to prove to the fans that I could live up to five stars," he said. "I wasn't thinking right. 'I had to come in and be me. I didn't do that.'"

Because of expectations based on the five-star ranking, Lucky might not have gotten the credit he deserves to this point in his career.

Quarterback **JOE GANZ** sees such rankings from a two-star point of view. "I think sometimes kids get a little caught up in recruiting (rankings), a little too caught up,"

he has said. "I think they take it a little too seriously."

"Maybe it hurts kids, too, when they come in with all that pressure. It was probably a lot easier for me. Nobody really expected anything from me."

Fan expectations based on such rankings might have affected him, too, indirectly. When **ZAC TAYLOR** was knocked out of the Kansas State game in 2005, Harrison Beck, a four-star recruit, got the call, even though Ganz had been practicing as the top back-up. "I don't know (if) it was the big recruiting thing they were all worried about," said Ganz. "I was only a two-star . . . so they thought that maybe if they put him in and lost, it would look better than putting me in."

"I never really got a straight answer. I never really understood why."

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CLARENCE THOMAS & TOM OSBORNE



HIGH COURT COMPLIMENT

CLARENCE THOMAS, U.S. Supreme Court justice, was an honorary coach on the Nebraska sideline for the New Mexico State game.

Thomas, a knowledgeable Cornhusker fan, "called me 'Renaissance Man,' " quarterback **JOE GANZ** said. "So that was pretty cool."

It also was appropriate, given Ganz's versatility. He's not just a drop-back passer. "It's fun to get in the mix, kind of like growing up, playing every position you can," said Ganz. "It's just a lot of fun."

BIG RESPONSIBILITY

MENELIK HOLT might be from San Diego, Calif., but the junior wide receiver understands Cornhusker football tradition. "Winning means a lot to this team. It means a lot to this state. And by no means are we going to let ourselves down, the coaches down, the people who work in the stadium down, the people who sell hotdogs in the stadium down," he said. "The people who wait in line for 20 years for tickets, we don't want to let them down either. We do it for you guys, for the fans. In a sense, on Saturdays, we're trying to carry you guys on our shoulders and represent Nebraska the best way we can."



MOST VICTORIES

Former Cornhusker **ERIC CROUCH**, the 2001 Heisman Trophy winner, is the winningest quarterback in Big 12 history. Nebraska was 35-7 in games he started during his four seasons. Two current quarterbacks could surpass Crouch by the time their careers are finished. Texas junior Colt McCoy went into the season with a 20-6 record as a starter, Oklahoma sophomore Sam Bradford with an 11-3 record.

Missouri senior Chase Daniel (20-7) and Kansas junior Todd Reesing (12-1) also began the season on pace to reach 30 career victories as starters.

1. **ERIC CROUCH**, Nebraska (1998-01)35-7
2. Vince Young, Texas (2003-05)30-2
3. Jason White, Oklahoma (2001-04)27-4
4. Chris Simms, Texas (2000-02)26-6
5. Brad Smith, Missouri (2002-05)25-3
6. **SCOTT FROST**, Nebraska (1996-97)24-2
7. Kliff Kingsbury, Texas Tech (1999-02)24-16

SIDELINES



HUSKER DAD

Sophomore defensive end **PIERRE ALLEN**'s son, Pierre Jr., celebrated his 2nd birthday on Aug. 28. "He knows football," Allen said. "Every time he sees football on TV, he goes, 'Da-da, Huskers.' I don't think he recognizes my number, but he knows the Huskers. Nebraska red . . . he knows the Huskers."



MISQUOTED

Typically, athletes complain about being misquoted. Not so, **TYLER WORTMAN**. "I've been pretty lucky," the senior line-backer told reporters recently. "Most of the reporters kind of twist my words in a good way, which I'm happy with. I can use all the help I can get. I can't think of anything that's been kind of off-the-wall, 'Oh, I didn't say that.' If it was (misquoted), it was like, 'That works.'"

That he said those things can be verified with a digital recorder.

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BO PELINI

Face in the crowd

On the Friday night before the Cornhuskers' 38-7 victory against New Mexico State, coach **JOHN COOK**'s volleyball team broke its own NCAA regular-season attendance record at the Devaney Sports Center.

The Huskers, ranked No. 2 at the time, defeated LSU in straight sets before a crowd of 13,412 that included **BO PELINI** at court-side.

Pelini has made a point of attending other Nebraska sports events, but this was in-season besides. "I think what he's doing so far is phenomenal with that young group of girls," Pelini said of Cook. "They're doing a good job, great job."

He was asked if he could learn anything from watching Cook's team.

"I know one thing, anybody who watches them play . . . sees that tremendous focus and intensity that his girls bring in their matches," said Pelini.

"He's a football coach coaching volleyball. He's a tremendous coach."

WALK-ON OPPORTUNITIES



MATT O'HANLON came to Nebraska as a walk-on but went on scholarship before the Western Michigan game. "It's funny because I didn't know he was a walk-on through the whole spring when I had him, until somebody here asked me the question what I thought about a walk-on being listed No. 1," defensive backs coach **MARVIN SANDERS** said. "Honestly, it's part of the Nebraska football program and it's part of the tradition we've had. We tell them this in the recruiting process, you come here, you work hard and you'll have the opportunity to earn a scholarship."

SIDELINES



IN MEMORIAM

Former Cornhusker defensive coordinator **LANCE VAN ZANDT** passed away at age 69 in late August in Beaumont, Texas. Van Zandt, who also coached the defensive backs, was on **TOM OSBORNE**'s staff from 1977 through 1980.

Van Zandt's defense was instrumental in Nebraska's first victory against Oklahoma during Osborne's tenure as head coach in 1978, and he also played an important role in the recruitment of Turner Gill.



RUBBER BAND MAN

Senior cornerback **ARMANDO MURILLO** isn't superstitious. But he does wear rubber bands around his wrist, and has been since "I was probably like 13," he said.



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That wasn't necessarily the case the past four years. "I don't think I would've gotten this shot if the other coaching staff was here," said O'Hanlon.

Bo Pelini has changed the culture, returning it to the way it was in the past. "I have all the trust and the respect for him in the world," O'Hanlon said.

BLOCKING DEMANDS

Sophomore wide receiver **NILES PAUL** has earned recognition for a couple of his blocks this season, including his first in the opening game against Western Michigan. "I thought, 'I'm going to make this the best block Coach has ever seen, show him I



deserve to be out here,'" Paul said. "My body numbed up. We watched it on film, and I just kind of fell because I couldn't feel my body for a minute."

The Western Michigan player might have been worse off. "He didn't know where he was at," said Paul. "That's what I wanted him to feel like."

Paul has had to learn to block because he never blocked in high school. "I could say I did, but I kind of just like, 'Go ahead, go right ahead.' But now if you don't block, you don't play. So you block your butt off for Coach (**TED**) **GILMORE**."

AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT



Nebraska's **MEMORIAL STADIUM** was included in ESPN.com's recent listing of America's 100 most important sports venues. The Cornhuskers' home was tied for No. 88, appropriately enough with Oklahoma's Memorial Stadium. Nebraska's stadium was included "because 'Through these gates pass the greatest fans in college football,' and that inscription on the stadium entrance might not be hyperbole."

Eleven other college football facilities made the list, led by Notre Dame Stadium at No. 18. Michigan Stadium and Ohio Stadium were tied at No. 27, followed by Oregon's Autzen Stadium (No. 33), Yale Bowl (No. 43), Grambling's Eddie Robinson Stadium (No. 60), LSU's Tiger Stadium (No. 63), Florida's Ben Hill Griffin Stadium (No. 77), Penn State's Beaver Stadium (No. 83), Tennessee's Neyland Stadium (No. 96) and California's Memorial Stadium (No. 100).

First on the list was Yankee Stadium, followed by Baltimore's Camden Yards, New York City's Madison Square Garden, The Astrodome in Houston and Augusta National Golf Club. Other venues included The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum (No. 6), Nike headquarters in Beaverton, Ore. (No. 8), Chicago's Wrigley Field (No. 13) and Soldier Field (No. 23), Rucker Park in Harlem (No. 31), Omaha's Rosenblatt Stadium (No. 51) and Coney Island in Brooklyn (No. 93).

BIG 12 REFLECTION

This season marks the 13th year of the Big 12, meaning Nebraska has now played each North Division team 12 times and each South Division team six times. The Huskers are 38-10 against the North (27-3 at home), while going 26-22 against the South (17-13 at home).

KANSAS (10-2)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 63-7 |
| 1997 | W | 35-0 |
| 1998 | W | 41-0 |
| 1999 | W | 24-17 |
| 2000 | W | 56-17 |
| 2001 | W | 51-7 |
| 2002 | W | 45-7 |
| 2003 | W | 24-3 |
| 2004 | W | 14-8 |
| 2005 | L | 15-40 |
| 2006 | W | 39-32 |
| 2007 | L | 39-76 |
| Avg. Score | | 37-18 |

K-STATE (7-5)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 39-3 |
| 1997 | W | 56-26 |
| 1998 | L | 30-40 |
| 1999 | W | 41-15 |
| 2000 | L | 28-29 |
| 2001 | W | 31-21 |
| 2002 | L | 13-49 |
| 2003 | L | 9-38 |
| 2004 | L | 21-45 |
| 2005 | W | 27-25 |
| 2006 | W | 21-3 |
| 2007 | W | 73-31 |
| Avg. Score | | 32-27 |

TEXAS A&M (4-2)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | | |
| 1997 | | |
| 1998 | L | 21-28 |
| 1999 | W | 37-0 |
| 2000 | | |
| 2001 | | |
| 2002 | W | 38-31 |
| 2003 | W | 48-12 |
| 2004 | | |
| 2005 | | |
| 2006 | W | 28-27 |
| 2007 | L | 14-36 |
| Avg. Score | | 31-22 |

MISSOURI (9-3)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 51-7 |
| 1997 | W | 45-38 |
| 1998 | W | 20-13 |
| 1999 | W | 40-10 |
| 2000 | W | 42-24 |
| 2001 | W | 36-3 |
| 2002 | W | 24-13 |
| 2003 | L | 24-41 |
| 2004 | W | 24-3 |
| 2005 | L | 24-41 |
| 2006 | W | 34-20 |
| 2007 | L | 6-41 |
| Avg. Score | | 31-21 |

BAYLOR (6-0)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 49-0 |
| 1997 | W | 49-21 |
| 1998 | | |
| 1999 | | |
| 2000 | W | 59-0 |
| 2001 | W | 48-7 |
| 2002 | | |
| 2003 | | |
| 2004 | W | 59-27 |
| 2005 | W | 23-14 |
| 2006 | | |
| 2007 | | |
| Avg. Score | | 48-12 |

OKLA. STATE (3-3)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | | |
| 1997 | | |
| 1998 | W | 24-21 |
| 1999 | W | 38-14 |
| 2000 | | |
| 2001 | | |
| 2002 | L | 21-24 |
| 2003 | W | 17-7 |
| 2004 | | |
| 2005 | | |
| 2006 | L | 29-41 |
| 2007 | L | 14-45 |
| Avg. Score | | 24-25 |

COLORADO (8-4)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 17-12 |
| 1997 | W | 27-24 |
| 1998 | W | 16-14 |
| 1999 | W | 33-30 |
| 2000 | W | 34-32 |
| 2001 | L | 36-62 |
| 2002 | L | 13-28 |
| 2003 | W | 31-22 |
| 2004 | L | 20-26 |
| 2005 | W | 30-3 |
| 2006 | W | 37-14 |
| 2007 | L | 51-65 |
| Avg. Score | | 29-28 |

TEXAS TECH (4-2)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 24-10 |
| 1997 | W | 29-0 |
| 1998 | | |
| 1999 | | |
| 2000 | W | 56-3 |
| 2001 | W | 41-31 |
| 2002 | | |
| 2003 | | |
| 2004 | L | 10-70 |
| 2005 | L | 31-34 |
| 2006 | | |
| 2007 | | |
| Avg. Score | | 32-25 |

TEXAS (0-6)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | | |
| 1997 | | |
| 1998 | L | 16-20 |
| 1999 | L | 20-24 |
| 2000 | | |
| 2001 | | |
| 2002 | L | 24-27 |
| 2003 | L | 7-31 |
| 2004 | | |
| 2005 | | |
| 2006 | L | 20-22 |
| 2007 | L | 25-28 |
| Avg. Score | | 19-25 |

IOWA STATE (10-2)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 49-14 |
| 1997 | W | 77-14 |
| 1998 | W | 42-7 |
| 1999 | W | 49-14 |
| 2000 | W | 49-27 |
| 2001 | W | 48-14 |
| 2002 | L | 14-36 |
| 2003 | W | 28-0 |
| 2004 | L | 27-34 |
| 2005 | W | 27-20 |
| 2006 | W | 28-14 |
| 2007 | W | 35-17 |
| Avg. Score | | 39-18 |

OKLAHOMA (3-3)

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| 1996 | W | 73-21 |
| 1997 | W | 69-7 |
| 1998 | | |
| 1999 | | |
| 2000 | L | 14-31 |
| 2001 | W | 20-10 |
| 2002 | | |
| 2003 | | |
| 2004 | L | 3-30 |
| 2005 | L | 24-31 |
| 2006 | | |
| 2007 | | |
| Avg. Score | | 34-22 |

YEAR RECORD

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1996 | 8-0 (1st) |
| 1997 | 8-0 (1st) |
| 1998 | 5-3 (2nd) |
| 1999 | 7-1 (1st) |
| 2000 | 6-2 (2nd) |
| 2001 | 7-1 (1st) |
| 2002 | 3-5 (4th) |
| 2003 | 5-3 (2nd) |
| 2004 | 3-5 (3rd) |
| 2005 | 4-4 (2nd) |
| 2006 | 6-2 (1st) |
| 2007 | 2-6 (5th) |
| Total | 64-32 |

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N



Jake Wesch: North Bend, NE



The transition to Nebraska from a small high school is bound to take time. Jake Wesch needed about a year and a half before he was completely comfortable. Not that he ever considered leaving. He was committed. "I came down here, I guess, with the intention of wanting to play sometime during my five years here," he said. "Obviously, that's worked out."

"I came with the attitude: 'I'll do whatever it takes to get on the field.'"

Wesch has handled kickoffs. He has been the back-up place-kicker and back-up punter. He's been the No. 1 holder for place-kicks, still is. And he's thrown a touchdown pass, teaming with tight end Hunter Teafatiller for 17 yards on a fake field goal against Kansas State in 2006.

The touchdown pass earned him recognition, of course. But so did his hold for the first of Alex Henery's four 44-yard field goals in the opening game against Western Michigan. Coach Bo Pelini made special mention of the hold afterward. "It wasn't a great hold, but it's probably the most credit I've got being a holder," Wesch said.

When he got to Nebraska, he had to adjust to the daily demands of a football player, "the stuff people don't realize, getting up at 6 in the morning all the time and running, conditioning, stuff like that," said Wesch, who grew up on a farm just outside of North Bend.

"I've had people tell me, 'You're a farm kid. You're used to getting up.' Well, I like to sleep in, too. My dad can attest to that. Sometimes, he had to literally drag us out of bed." **N**

JAKE WESCH

6-1, 205, Senior

Hometown: North Bend, Neb.

County: Dodge

Population: 1,213 (2000)

Distance from Lincoln: 45 miles

Nebraska football letterman:

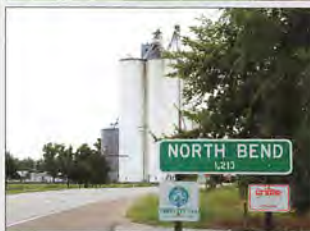
Jake Wesch, H/PK (2005-present)

Chris Saalfeld, OG (2000)

Dennis Emanuel, G (1951, 1958)

Dean Lux, E (1955)

Small-town Nebraska: "Real friendly people, everyone knows everybody. Word travels quickly there, anything that happens. I guess I grew up (learning) a lot of life lessons there. A lot of people call it 'God's country.' I tell people that's what it's known as."



SIDELINES



WE'RE ON ITUNES

The new Huskers Illustrated Radio Show, sponsored by the Nebraska Lottery, is now available as a podcast on Apple's iTunes Store.

Husker fans can now download the weekly show to their MP3 player and take it with them.

The show, hosted by Chris Schmidt features notable guests from around the country and provides recruiting updates and pre-game analysis. The show can also be heard for free at HuskersIllustrated.com.

LONG AGO

Missouri has risen to national prominence but it hasn't defeated Nebraska in Lincoln since 1978.

A week after the Cornhuskers defeated No. 1 Oklahoma to move up to No. 2 in the rankings, they fell to coach Warren Powers' first Missouri team 35-31.

Nebraska appeared to be on its way to an Orange Bowl national championship game against Penn State when Rick Berns ran 82 yards for a touchdown just 18 seconds into the game. But Missouri tailback James Wilder rushed for 181 yards and four touchdowns to fuel the upset. Powers' Washington State team upset the Cornhuskers in the previous season's opener, also in Lincoln, 19-10.



THE BIG 12 BEAT

BY CURT MCKEEVER

Mizzou's Daniels improves his game

Missouri coach Gary Pinkel knew how some people would take it when he said prior to last season that he expected Chase Daniel to be better than he was as a sophomore in 2006.

Isn't the guy already good enough?

Well, the Tigers' quarterback *was* better, upping his completion percentage from 63.5 to 69.7, throwing for 643 more yards, five more touchdowns and no more interceptions while becoming his school's first-ever Heisman Trophy finalist.

Don't look now, but he's at it again as a senior. While directing Mizzou to a 4-0 record, Daniel completed 75.9 percent of his passes for 1,412 yards and 12 TDs, with just one pick.

"Most people will say 'Well, how can you play better?'" Pinkel said. "I just think the experience factor allows you to play at a whole different level. Obviously, he's very driven ... so you never worry about him not being prepared."

During the Tigers' 42-21 win against Buffalo, Daniel, who owns the best career quarterback rating in school history, went 36-for-43 to set a Missouri completion percentage record while amassing a career-high 439 yards. He also established a Big 12 mark with 20 straight completions.

"I think he's upped his game, just because he sees more, he understands things more," Pinkel said. "He also has the players around him, like Jeremy Maclin, Chase Coffman, Tommy Saunders. They also are very, very experienced. I think the combination of both has allowed us, to this point, have a high level degree of efficiency, and hopefully it'll continue."

Leading Rice 21-3 late in the second quarter, **TEXAS'** defense produced a goal-line stand for the ages.

Eleven plays after reaching a first-and-goal at the Longhorns' 2-yard line, the Owls, who benefited from two pass-interference calls in the end zone, came away scoreless.

"In 33 years of coaching, that was a first,"

Mack Brown said.

Texas wasn't all smiles after the game though, as it lost Blain Irby to a season-ending knee injury. That left the Longhorns down three tight ends since fall camp and possibly out of any who possess the speed to stretch the field as a receiver.

KANSAS coach Mark Mangino held to his word that any Jayhawk wide receiver who wasn't willing to work hard at blocking would feel his wrath, as Dezmon Briscoe and Daymond Patterson didn't start in the Jayhawks' final non-conference game against Sam Houston State.

Mangino then noted that Dexter Fields could be ready to play in the team's Big 12 opener at Iowa State on Oct. 4. Fields, who led KU in receptions last year, hasn't played since leaving the opener with a left foot or ankle injury.

TEXASTECH running back Shannon Woods has gotten out of Mike Leach's doghouse. In a win against Massachusetts, Woods rushed for 108 yards – the first 100-yard game by a Red Raider since the 2006 Insight Bowl (when he gained 109 yards against Minnesota).

Woods' production helped Tech score as many TDs on the ground (12) through four games as they had in the air.

And while Leach's club is famous for mesmerizing folks with its passing numbers, through four games it also was tied for the national lead with 10 interceptions – the same number it had all last season.

KANSAS STATE's 38-29 loss at Louisville marked the first time in 17 games that the Wildcats came up on the short end when either the defense or special teams scored a TD. Deon Murphy returned a punt 86 yards for a score, but K-State's demise was allowing the Cardinals to hold a 41:26-to-18:34 edge in time of possession.

IOWA STATE's 34-31 overtime loss at UNLV included a rally from a 21-0 halftime deficit. But

in the end, the Cyclones were left as frustrated as the five personal foul penalties they incurred would indicate.

Two of those were drawn by freshman cornerback Leonard Johnson, who was ejected after the second for a late hit in the end zone.

Art Briles is wasting no time ushering in the biggest piece to his **BAYLOR** rebuilding puzzle – quarterback Robert Griffin. Through four games, the true freshman had totaled 12 TDs, with the average distance being 24.8 yards. Griffin threw for three scores and ran for another in a 31-28 overtime loss at unbeaten Connecticut.

"We are going to have to go down there and play next year, and I'm not looking forward to that," UConn coach Randy Edsall said.

That night, the Bears also rushed for more than 100 yards for a third straight game. Their last streak that long occurred during the first five games of 2005.

TEXAS A&M Jerrod Johnson also is making a big splash early in his career. Against Miami, the sophomore threw for 275 yards, the most ever for an Aggie quarterback in his starting debut.

That performance, though, wasn't enough to make him the first in the last seven to lead A&M to victory. The six before him who lost their starting debuts were: Stephen McGee, Reggie McNeal, Dustin Long, Mark Farris, Randy McCown and Brannndon Stewart.

MISSOURI hadn't committed a turnover until having three in its win against Buffalo. That same day, kicker Jeff Wolfert missed a field goal for the first time in 23 attempts. And, still, the Tigers won easy.

COLORADO's overtime win against West Virginia let the Buffs pull a complete flip-flop to how they started the Dan Hawkins era two years ago. CU broke out the 'I' formation against the Mountaineers, leading to a 166-yard game by freshman running back Rodney Stewart.



Shukree Barfield

6-4, 290, Senior, Defensive Tackle, Camden, N.J.

The renewal of the Nebraska-Oklahoma rivalry has special significance for Shukree Barfield, even though he's in only his second season as a Cornhusker. He's also from Camden, N.J., and didn't know much about Nebraska before the previous staff began recruiting him at Garden City (Kan.) Community College.

But Phil Loadholt, a second-team All-Big 12 offensive tackle, plays for the Sooners. And Loadholt was Barfield's junior college teammate.

"Me and him are like brothers," said Barfield. "When I'm going through something, he's probably the first one besides my family that I'll call and tell him my problems. I ain't telling

you what we've been through, but we've been through so much together. He's a cool guy. I love him to death."

He and Loadholt maintain contact, and the Oklahoma game is a regular topic. "When we're on the field, we've got to do what we've got to do," Barfield said. "But off the field, we're going to be brothers again, be close."

Kevin Dixon, who was dismissed from the team prior to the start of fall camp, also was a junior college teammate of the two. "I would like to see him here, but things happen," said Barfield. "I wish the best for him."

Dixon is sitting out this season at Troy.

Hi: What was your favorite college football team when you were growing up?

BARFIELD: Honestly, I never had a team I looked up to as I was growing up. I just watched college football. That's about it.

Hi: Are you superstitious?

BARFIELD: No, not at all. As far as having any superstitions about football, if you do, you're never going to be right. You're always going to make the same mistakes over and over again.

Hi: Did you request a No. 56 jersey?

BARFIELD: My freshman year in high school, I had 53 but my last three years I had 56. So when I was in juco, I requested that number, and when I came here, I requested the same thing. Somebody did have it, a punter. But the coaches said it would be cool because we don't play the same position.

Hi: What's the worst thing about playing football?

BARFIELD: Losing, you play this sport to win. I mean, if you're a competitive person, you never want to lose. And I think that's the worst thing. Making the same mistakes over and over again, I find that hard, too.

Hi: If you could play any position on offense, what would it be?

BARFIELD: I played tight end back in high school, so I'd play tight end again. I like catching the ball. I was always on the line blocking, but I'd catch the ball sometimes, too.

Hi: What music do you have on your iPod?

BARFIELD: I'm a Lil' Wayne fan. I love Lil' Wayne. I like Jeezy. I like Jay-Z somewhat. Being from the East Coast, a lot of people might find that hard to believe, but I'm a Lil' Wayne fan. He's my boy.

Hi: What's your favorite vegetable and least favorite vegetable?

BARFIELD: Spinach . . . I don't like green beans. They taste funny to me. I'm not big on green beans at all.

Hi: What do you remember about your recruiting visit to Nebraska?

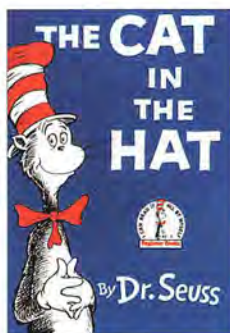
BARFIELD: It was fun. The fans treated me and "K" (Kevin Dixon) with the utmost respect when we got here. When I went to the game, they knew me before I even got here. They had signs that said "Barfield and Kevin Dixon come here." I found that very interesting.

Hi: What is there to do in Garden City, Kan.?

BARFIELD: Nothing, it's as simple as that, nothing. Go to school if you want to get an education and play football, no party atmosphere, nothing. When I first went there, I left. I went home. I made a mistake. Knowing I made a mistake, I had to go back and just stick it out. I'm glad I did. If it wasn't for Garden City, I wouldn't be here. I'd tell anybody that.

Hi: What's the best book you've read recently?

BARFIELD: I don't like reading books. I used to read *The Cat in the Hat*, the basics, as a little kid. I get bored reading books.



Matt Penland

Former Husker ministers to athletes

Matt Penland wants to be a positive influence on University of Nebraska student-athletes.

As the Husker football program's chaplain, he gets that opportunity almost every day.

His desire to help guide young people in life matters "really started when I was playing here and just how the coaches affected me — Coach (Tom) Osborne and his influence on my life," said the 37-year-old Penland, a former Nebraska linebacker (1990-92) from University Christian High School in Jacksonville, Fla.

"Coach Osborne was a big reason I came up from Jacksonville in 1989," Penland continued.

Penland teaches Nebraska players that life has three main dynamics: "The mental side of things, the physical side of things,

and also the spiritual side of things. Faith and commitment were such an important part of Coach Osborne's life. He shared those things with us. These coaches now want to continue on with that and do those things here. That's kind of my role. To shepherd these players and guide them in the right direction.

"Pointing them to Jesus Christ is the main thrust we focus on."

Penland tries to provide a solid foundation for players at a key point in their lives.

"Guys are out on their own and trying to discover what they're going to put their faith in and believe in," he said.

Penland, who also works as a minister for a Lincoln church, chose to play for Nebraska despite having attracted scholarship offers



from some smaller schools, including Liberty (Va.) University and Western Kentucky. In 1989, he led the Husker junior varsity team in tackles. In 1990, as a sophomore, he was taken out of a planned redshirt year to back up Mike Petko at strongside linebacker. He played in all 11 games, plus the Citrus Bowl, and finished with 22 tackles.

Along the way, Penland became known as a stalwart on special teams. His playing career ended in 1992 when he suffered the second major knee injury of his career in the fourth quarter of a non-conference home game against Arizona State.

"I actually broke my foot in three spots on the same play. You have to be real athletic to do that," Penland said with a grin.

Catching up with BY MIKE BABCOCK

Bill Bobbora

Cornhuskers have a special place in his heart

That Bill Bobbora came to Nebraska shows the immediate trust he had in coach Tom Osborne, offensive line coach Milt Tenopir and academic counselor Ursula Walsh. He certainly wasn't swayed by his recruiting visit, on a cold, snowy December weekend. After a night out, Tom Welter, his host, dropped him off at the Nebraska Center on East Campus. He was staying at the Cornhusker Hotel downtown. He stood in the snow, pizza in hand, not knowing what to do until a night-shift custodian gave him a ride to the hotel. Even so, Nebraska "still felt like the right place to be," Bobbora said.

The death of Cornhusker teammate Jake Young in a terrorist bombing in Bali, Indonesia in 2002 had a profound effect on Bobbora. "It wasn't until Jake died that we

really all just stopped and thought about how important and how powerful Nebraska is and was for all of us," he said. "There is not a day that goes by now that I don't stop and think about Jake, about the special times we all had, about some tidbit of wisdom Coach Osborne or Coach Tenopir instilled in us, or just some funny moment."

Bobbora, who earned an MBA at the University of Texas, is starting a mentoring program

BILL BOBBORA

LETTERS: 1987-89

POSITION: Offensive Guard

CURRENT: Corporate banking Wachovia Bank in Houston, teaching in the University of Houston's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship, co-founder of non-profit mentoring program uwantgame.

WIFE: Jenee CHILDREN: Jena (8)

for high school student-athletes. The Web site is www.uwantgame.org.



NU looks to Texas for linebacker help

BY RICK SHAW

It was clear back in April when **SHAWN BODTMANN**, a 6-0, 205-pound outside linebacker out of Scranton (Pa.) West, announced his intentions of playing football for the University of Nebraska. Though 11 athletes have joined him on the pledge list for the Husker recruiting class of 2009, no others are penciled-in to start their playing days in Lincoln in the linebacker corp.

With approximately eight to 10 spots still available to be claimed for the 2009 class, the Husker coaching staff hopes to award at least one, if not two, of those spots to linebackers. Judging from the recruiting landscape as of late September, the 'Big Red' brass looks to have plenty of options.

CHRIS WILLIAMS is widely considered to be one of the top inside linebacker prospects in the country and he has the scholarship offers to prove it. The 6-0, 230-pound defensive playmaker out of Abilene (Texas) holds tenders from LSU, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas A&M, Texas Tech and several others. However, at this stage in his recruitment according to his coach Steve Warren, it appears to be a Husker/Tiger battle for his pledge.

Williams was named the AP Class 5A Junior MVP for his performance in 2007, racking up 77 tackles with 26 tackles for losses and nine sacks. He is rated the nation's No. 13 inside linebacker and No. 22 overall prospect in the state of Texas (four-stars) by Rivals.com.

Another prospect from the Lone Star State with Nebraska on his shortlist is **CORDARIUS GOLSTON** of Lancaster. Though not rated quite as high as Williams by the recruiting publications, the 6-1, 195-pounder has been equally productive on the gridiron. As a junior,

he picked up over 100 tackles and first-team all-district honors.

Golston has picked up scholarship offers from Arizona and Colorado State in addition to Nebraska. He visited the Husker campus back in June and enjoyed the experience. However, the Wildcats may currently be the team to beat.

"I'm kind of leaning towards Arizona to be honest," Golston said. "They really don't have a lot of young linebackers on their roster. I also love the city."

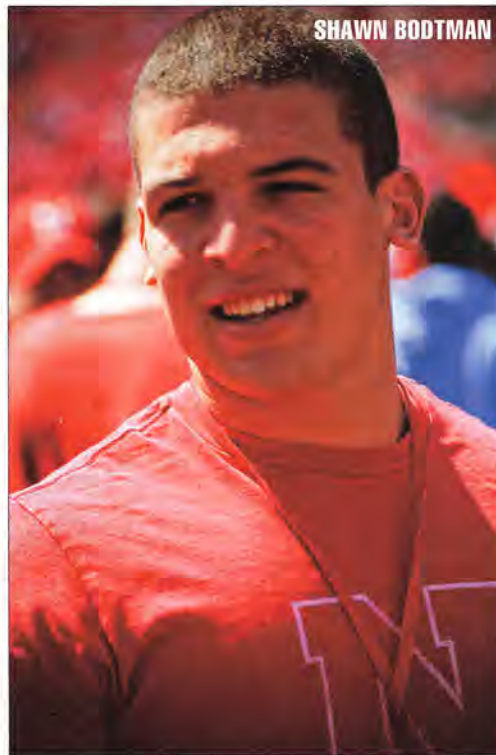
"Nebraska is right up there too though. At Arizona, the city and community seemed to be more packed. Nebraska makes up for it though with their facilities and things of that nature. Oh man, they have awesome facilities. From the weights to the school to the player's lounge, they really have one of the nicest set-ups in the country. I definitely plan to visit both schools before finalizing a choice."

Rivals rated Golston as the No. 63 outside linebacker prospect (three-stars) in the country.

"I'VE NEVER

had a kid like him before. I've had some great players, but no one who brings everything they have on every play and in practice."

PETE DUFFY
RANCHO VERDE (CALIF.)
HEAD COACH ON ERIC MARTIN



SHAWN BODTMAN

A third linebacker from Texas giving the Huskers a hard look is **RODERICK GOODLOW** of Adamson High School in Dallas. With scholarship offers in the double-digits, the speedy (4.5-second 40-yard dash) prospect has already begun to narrow his college list and Nebraska made the final cut.

"My five favorites are Wisconsin, Northwestern, Nebraska, Arkansas and Colorado," Goodlow said. "Each of those programs are headed in the right direction, nobody is backtracking. They're all going into new systems and working on big things in their program."

"At Nebraska, I like the tradition of the 'Blackshirts.' I know they have a good new coach from LSU (Bo Pelini) and that's showing me that they're heading down the right path."

Rated the nation's No. 33 outside linebacker

prospect (three-stars) by Rivals, Goodlow registered 109 total tackles and four interceptions as a junior on his way to first-team all-district honors. He also caught 18 passes for 224 yards and one touchdown as a receiver on offense.

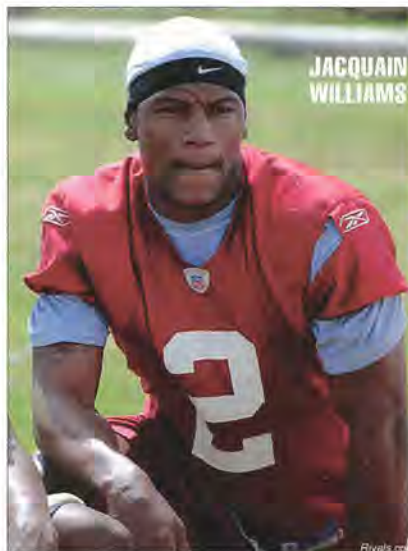
ERIC MARTIN, one of the top linebacker prospects on the West Coast, also has his eye on Nebraska. The 6-2, 216-pound athlete out of Moreno Valley (Calif.) Rancho Verde holds scholarship offers from Arizona, Arizona State, Nebraska, Washington, Washington State, Nevada and others but it's the Huskers who currently sit at the top of his list.

"He mentions Nebraska the most," Rancho Verde Head Coach Pete Duffy said. "He's really been impressed with all of the handwritten letters he's been receiving from coach Carl Pelini. He's been getting a lot of attention from Nebraska and he likes it."

"He's just an incredible player and has every tool you could want. I've never had a kid like him before. I've had some great players, but no one who brings everything they have on every play and in every practice. He's going to be a great college player and some school will be very lucky to have him."

Rated the nation's No. 25 outside linebacker prospect (three-stars) by Rivals.com, Martin utilized his 4.6-second speed in the 40-yard dash to tally over 100 tackles and 10 sacks as a junior, earning first-team all-league honors.

JACQUAIN WILLIAMS is one of the top linebacker prospects in the junior college ranks this season and the Huskers are among the schools in high pursuit. The 6-4, 220-pound standout registered 60 tackles, 11 tackles for



loss, six sacks and two interceptions during his first season at Fort Scott (Kan.) Community College, earning early scholarship offers from UAB, Arkansas, Central Florida, Nebraska and South Florida.

"Jacquain already has five offers and he's getting more schools who are inquiring about him everyday," Fort Scott Community wide receiver coach Michael Chandler said. "He has tremendous range at linebacker and can run in the 4.5 range. He can fly around and cover in the passing game, but has the ability to still come up and make a hit."

Since Williams is originally from Tampa, South Florida may hold the early edge in this recruiting battle. However, he and two teammates took official visits to Nebraska on September 5 and reportedly liked what they saw in Lincoln.

"I'm looking toward South Florida," Williams said. "However, I really enjoyed my trip to Nebraska and they've really gotten me thinking as well."

The Huskers hope to snag another prospect or two at the linebacker positions when all of the ink dries on letters of intent in early February. With heavy interest being received from prospects all over the country, that shouldn't be a problem. **N**



COMMITTED



QVALE EXCITED ABOUT NU

Williston, N.D., offensive lineman **BRENT QVALE'S** commitment to Nebraska has had an effect on him as a senior and pushes him harder as he plays his last year of high school ball.

The 6-7, 300-pounder has thought about what it will be like joining the Huskers next year as a part of the 2009 recruiting class. The tradition of offensive linemen in Lincoln and his future position coach at NU was a big part of his decision and continues to motivate him.

His bond with NU offensive line coach **BARNEY COTTON** continues to grow.

"I think we're a lot alike," Qvale said about Cotton. "I don't how to explain it, but when he wants to he can get down to work which is the way I am. He's pretty relaxed until it's business time."

Of course since his commitment to NU, he says while his team and senior season is a high priority, knowing he'll be heading to the Big 12 next year, makes him want to work even harder.

He also wants to continue the tradition that the Huskers have built in terms of producing top players up front.

"A big part in my decision was the history of the offensive linemen that have come out of Nebraska," he said. "The coaches think that I have the size and quickness... the stuff to be the next big lineman to come out of Nebraska."

"And, the facilities were the best I'd ever seen and I felt at home in Nebraska," Qvale said. "It's a lot like North Dakota down there."

by John Talman, Recruiting Publisher
HuskiersIllustrated.com

Recruiting Notebook

It's never too early

by Sean Stevens

Recruiting is a non-stop process, and the earlier a program gets its name in front of a prospect the better their chances to land a signature on Signing Day become. Time after time we hear recruits saying that they always remember their first scholarship offer.

With that in mind, Nebraska has an early jump on the 2010 recruiting cycle. The first day that high school juniors could be offered in writing was Sept. 1, and the Huskers wasted no time in beginning their pursuit.

One of the first offers went out to Aurora, Neb., offensive lineman **ANDREW RODRIGUEZ**. The 6-6, 300-pounder moved to Aurora from Camden, N.J., before his freshman year of high school and after a bit of culture shock has settled in nicely.

"I was shocked when I first got here," Rodriguez said. "I was home sick for about two weeks, but now I love it here and I love playing football."

Rodriguez camped in Lincoln last summer and drew praise at the NIKE Training Camp in Fort Worth, Texas this summer with his footwork during agility drills. He took in his first Nebraska

game when the Huskers opened their season against Western Michigan.

"It was awesome," Rodriguez said. "Just the environment – it was a whole bunch of people, 80,000 fans, getting pumped for the game and the players getting pumped up. That got me pumped up."

Shortly after that trip Rodriguez received his Husker offer, but he didn't commit immediately.

"It moved me closer to them," Rodriguez said. "Because they were the first one to send me a scholarship... I don't know how long I want to wait."

Rodriguez is also considering Michigan, Oregon and Texas.



SIDELINES

SAME NAME, DIFFERENT FACE

TYLER GABBERT is a name that might ring a bell for NU fans. His older brother, Blaine, initially committed to the Huskers in 2008 and then signed with Missouri after the staff changes in Lincoln.

The 6-0, 175-pound quarterback from Ballwin, Mo., attended his second Nebraska Elite QB Academy this summer and earned the underclassmen division MVP award.

"I'm interested in Nebraska a lot," Gabbert said. "I also went to a Missouri one-day camp, and it was good."

Gabbert has offers from Nebraska and Iowa along with interest from around the Big Twelve and Big Ten region.

NU OFFERS TEAMMATES

Missouri City, Texas teammates – safety **HARVEY JACKSON** (6-1/180) and linebacker **SHAUN LEWIS** (6-1/200) – both received Nebraska offers on Sept. 1. Lewis also has been tendered by Houston and Texas A&M.

Lewis was the district defensive newcomer of the year as a sophomore with 11 sacks and 100 total tackles. He has interest in the Huskers, but will take his time making a decision.

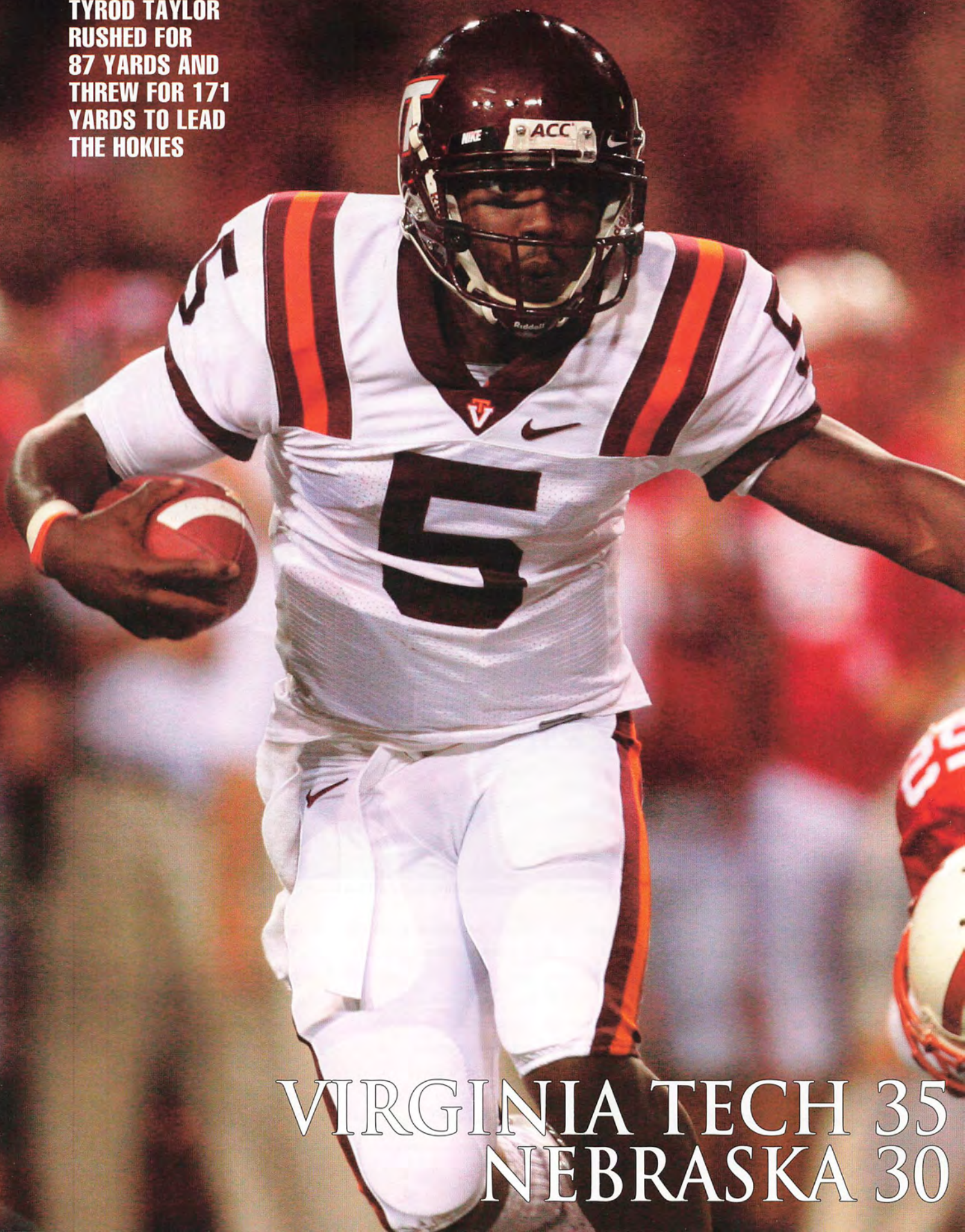
"It's a good school. I'm considering them as well as all other schools," he said. "I feel real good that I'm getting noticed. I know I won't be going to any of these colleges without my academics being strong. I'm going to focus on recruiting later on."

Both players plan unofficial visits this fall to as yet undecided destinations.

2009 Nebraska Commitment List

| Name | Pos. | Ht. | Wt. | Hometown (High School) |
|-----------------------|------|------|-----|----------------------------------|
| Nick Ash | OL | 6-5 | 261 | Keller, Texas (Keller) |
| Shawn Bodtmann | OLB | 6-0 | 205 | Scranton, Pa. (West Scranton) |
| DeAndre Byrd | CB | 5-10 | 170 | Tallahassee, Fla. (Lincoln) |
| Jess Coffey | OL | 6-7 | 270 | Denton, Texas (Guyer) |
| Emerson Evans | DE | 6-1 | 230 | Houston, Texas (Alief Taylor) |
| Cody Green | QB | 6-4 | 220 | Dayton, Texas (Dayton) |
| Taylor Martinez | ATH | 6-0 | 176 | Corona, Calif. (Centennial) |
| Cole Pensick | DL | 6-2 | 250 | Lincoln, Neb. (Northeast) |
| Thaddeus Randle | DL | 6-1 | 255 | Galena Park, Texas (North Shore) |
| Dontrayevous Robinson | RB | 6-1 | 215 | Euless, Texas (Trinity) |
| Brent Qvale | OL | 6-7 | 300 | Williston, N.D. (Williston) |
| C.J. Zimmerer | FB | 6-0 | 213 | Omaha, Neb. (Omaha Gross) |

**TYROD TAYLOR
RUSHED FOR
87 YARDS AND
THREW FOR 171
YARDS TO LEAD
THE HOKIES**



**VIRGINIA TECH 35
NEBRASKA 30**

Emotions run high

A key officiating call and a momentary lapse in composure combined to become a major factor late in Virginia Tech's 35-30 victory over Nebraska.

The game-turning events occurred in rapid-fire succession to aid what proved to be the winning score for the Hokies as quarterback Tyrod Taylor's 2-yard touchdown run with 2:28 remaining put Virginia Tech ahead 35-23. The 11-play, 80-yard scoring drive answered an 88-yard punt return for a TD by Nebraska's Nate Swift that had threatened to steal the momentum for the Huskers.

With the Hokies clinging to a 28-23 lead, Taylor was forced out of bounds 2 yards short of a first down on a third-and-4 play from the Nebraska 37-yard line. However, Huskers' nose tackle Ndamukong Suh was flagged for a 15-yard personal foul penalty for making contact with Taylor on the sideline, giving Virginia Tech a first down at the Nebraska 20.

The already favorable field position got even better for the Hokies prior to the next snap as Nebraska coach Bo Pelini was then assessed an unsportsmanlike-conduct penalty for arguing the call. The second flag gave Virginia Tech a first down at the Huskers' 11.

Three plays later, Taylor scored what proved to be the game-winning TD.

Pelini said the back-to-back penalties were obviously crucial.

"The one was mine," Pelini said. "I was surprised he threw the flag. I've got to be smarter than that."

Nebraska linebacker Cody Glenn said the



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

Nebraska was flagged for three personal fouls late in the fourth quarter.

penalty on Suh was "heart-breaking" after the Huskers thought they had just made a crucial third-down stop.

"But we've got to come back from it," Glenn said. "We can't blame the refs. We can't blame anybody but ourselves."

"We still had an opportunity. They didn't score. They just got a first down. We still could've got a turnover or held them to three

points, so the game wasn't over.

Although the controversial late-hit call occurred on the Nebraska sideline, Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer said it appeared to be the correct ruling.

"That's a tough call to get (for Nebraska)," Beamer said. "I hope it was an accurate call, and I think it was." **N**

— by Terry Douglass

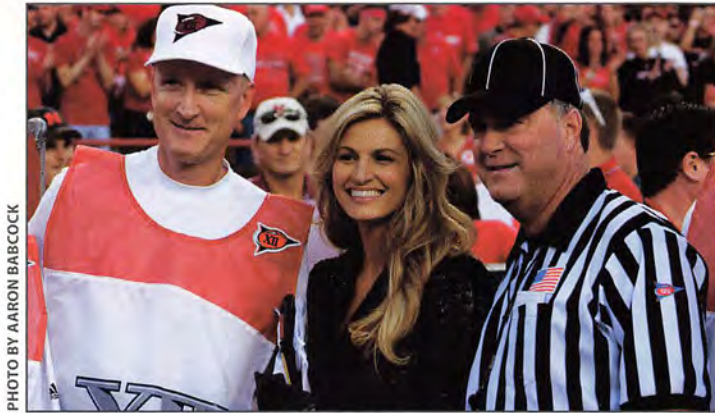


PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

ABC announcer Erin Andrews obliges a pre-game photo for the officials.



PHOTO BY RANDY HAMPTON

Defensive Coordinator Carl Pelini addresses the defense before the game.



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

Roy Helu rushes for a 12-yard, third quarter touchdown.

REPORT CARD

RUSHING:

D

The inability to establish a consistent ground game hindered a Nebraska unit that expected to count its offensive line as a major strength. Fifty-five yards rushing – 2.2 per carry – isn't going to cut it.

PASSING:

C+

Save for tight end **MIKE MCNEILL**, Cornhusker receivers appeared to have a difficult time getting open through three quarters. **JOE GANZ** had 132 of his 278 passing yards in the fourth period, but it was too little, too late.

RUSHING DEFENSE:

C

Nebraska did a decent job limiting Virginia Tech running backs Darren Evans (72 yards) and Kenny Lewis (50 yards), but well-timed designed runs and scrambles by quarterback Tyrod Taylor (87 yards) proved to be crucial.

PASSING DEFENSE:

C

Taylor, who entered the game averaging 65 passing yards per game, exploited Nebraska for 171 yards on 9-of-15 passing. That's a concern as Missouri's Chase Daniel won't miss as many open receivers as Taylor did.

KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS:

C

Only **NATE SWIFT**'s 88-yard punt return TD saved a failing grade. A blocked punt for a safety, two punt returns for 49 yards by Victor Harris and a 41-yard kickoff return by Lewis gave the Hokies an overall edge.



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

Greg Boone recovers Nebraska's on-side kick attempt.



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

ON A POSITIVE NOTE

NATE SWIFT's 88-yard punt return for a touchdown in the fourth quarter was the fourth-longest in school history. "That's just a guy making a play," said coach **BO PELINI**.

The Cornhuskers were looking to block the punt, "so he didn't have much blocking," Pelini said. "That's just a guy stepping up and reaching down deep, making a play, trying to put the football team on his back and win a game."

Swift, however, credited his teammates.

"Coach **(RON) BROWN** always preaches to not fair-catch it and trust that your guys are going to block those guys, and I trusted them," he said. "I kind of had to make a guy miss. The first 'gunner' was coming

down, but other than that, I think the guys blocked great and gave me a good lane for the touchdown."

GROUND GAME STIFLED

Nebraska's running game couldn't get untracked. The Cornhuskers rushed 25 times for a net of 55 yards, their lowest total since last season's USC game (28-31).

"Their d-coordinator (Bud Foster) always finds a way to put one more guy in the box than you can block," said quarterback **JOE GANZ**.

"Obviously, he's had great success over the last couple of years, and you've just got to give him credit. He did a great job of scheming us."

FACING ADVERSITY

Even when the Cornhuskers trailed 28-10, the attitude on the sideline was "businesslike," said coach **BO PELINI**. "There was some emotion but there was no finger-pointing ... the guys hung in there. We talked about it before the game: 'No matter what happens, you're going to face some adversity at times. No matter what, you've got to hang in there and try to win the football game.' And I think our kids did that."

ONE-THIRD OF THE GAME

NATE SWIFT's 88-yard punt return for a touchdown and a shanked punt early notwithstanding, Virginia Tech won the special-teams play. That should have been no surprise. "We knew going into the football game that special teams was going to be big," said coach **BO PELINI**. "It always is when you play Virginia Tech."

LONGEST PUNT RETURNS

1. Bobby Newcombe vs. Missouri, 2000..... 94 yards
2. Johnny Rodgers vs. Oklahoma State, 1971 92 yards
3. DeJuan Groce vs. Missouri, 2002..... 89 yards
4. **NATE SWIFT VS. VIRGINIA TECH, 2008 88 YARDS**



PHOTOS BY SCOTT BRUHN

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Quarterback **JOE GANZ**, who completed 17-of-26 passes for 278 yards and two touchdowns with one interception, took responsibility for the Cornhuskers' early 9-0 deficit. "That one pick I threw ended up being the turning point in the game," he said.

"So it sucks. I feel like I let the guys down."

Virginia Tech cornerback Victor "Macho" Harris made the interception, the 11th of his career and second this season, and returned it to the Nebraska 5-yard line to set up the Hokies' first touchdown with 5:22 remaining in the first quarter.



MORE ON SPECIAL TEAMS

Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer credited his special teams, though "they did some good things, too," he said of the Cornhuskers. "I think when you're playing a good football team, and Nebraska's a good football team, you better be good in your special teams."

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Hokies cornerback Victor "Macho" Harris was complimentary in victory. "Nebraska has a great, great, great tradition," he said. "I tip my hat to them because they came out to

play four quarters very, very hard. People can say what they want about Nebraska. Nebraska is still Nebraska. I've got so much respect for Nebraska. They played a heck of a game, heck of a game."

CREDIT THE FANS

Tyrod Taylor, Virginia Tech's sophomore quarterback, acknowledged Cornhusker fans, who "played a great role out there trying to get us side-tracked," he said.

Cornerback Victor "Macho" Harris was similarly impressed. "To be honest with you, I didn't think it was going to be that crazy," he said. "But it was loud. The program and the fans around this program do a great job trying to lift them up."

RECORD HOME CROWD

The crowd of 85,831 (consecutive sellout 293) was a Memorial Stadium record and the third-largest Virginia Tech has ever played in front of. The previous record crowd was 85,800 for the Colorado game in 2006.

QUICKLY



» **ALEX HENERY**'s 48-yard field goal in the second quarter was a career long. His previous long field goal was 44 yards. He had four of them in the season-opener.

» Senior linebacker **CODY GLENN** had a career-high, and team-best, 14 tackles. Junior linebacker **PHILLIP DILLARD** had a career-high 11 tackles.

» Quarterback **JOE GANZ** climbed to No. 10 on the school's career-passing list. He has passed for 2,700 yards, just 148 short of No. 8, **JAMMAL LORD**.

» Cornhusker captains for the game were tackle **LYDON MURTHA** on offense, cornerback **ARMANDO MURILLO** and safety **LARRY ASANTE** on defense and wide receiver-kick returner **NILES PAUL** on special teams.

» The loss was just the fourth for Nebraska in 30 night games at Memorial Stadium.

» The Cornhuskers are 14-15 all-time against current members of the Atlantic Coast Conference, including 1-1 against Virginia Tech. Nebraska won the 1996 Orange Bowl against the Hokies, 41-21.

SUMMARY

SCORING

Sept. 27, 2008
Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.
Attendance: 85,831

| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | Tot |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Virginia Tech | 9 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 35 |
| Nebraska | 7 | 3 | 7 | 13 | 30 |

First Quarter

| | | | |
|----|--|----|----|
| VT | Safety 8:35 | VT | NU |
| | | 2 | 0 |
| VT | Evans 1-yard Run (Keys Kick) 05:22 Drive: 3 plays 5 yds 1:16 | 9 | 0 |
| NU | McNeill Pass from Ganz 32-yards (Henery Kick) 03:54 Drive: 3 plays 68 yds 1:14 | 9 | 7 |

Second Quarter

| | | | |
|----|---|----|----|
| VT | Keys 19-yard Field Goal 14:51 Drive: 10 plays 54 yds 3:52 | 12 | 7 |
| NU | Henery 48-yard Field Goal 10:45 Drive: 9 plays 45 yds 3:56 | 12 | 10 |
| VT | Keys 38-yard Field Goal 7:10 Drive: 9 plays 54 yds 3:30 | 15 | 10 |
| VT | Keys 27-yard Field Goal 1:15 Drive: 9 plays 66 yds 4:21 | 18 | 10 |

Third Quarter

| | | | |
|----|--|----|----|
| VT | Keys 36-yard Field Goal 10:25 Drive: 9 plays 61 yds 4:35 | 21 | 10 |
| VT | Evans 19-yard Run (Keys Kick) 06:54 Drive: 3 plays 33 yds 1:10 | 28 | 10 |
| NU | Helu 12-yard Run (Henery Kick) 00:04 Drive: 12 plays 75 yds 6:40 | 28 | 17 |

Fourth Quarter

| | | | |
|----|---|----|----|
| NU | Swift 88-yard Punt Return (Ganz Pass Fall) 07:52 | 28 | 23 |
| VT | Taylor 2-yard Run (Keys Kick) 02:28 Drive: 11 plays 80 yds 5:24 | 35 | 23 |
| NU | Peterson Pass from Ganz 17-yards (Henery Kick) 01:32 Drive: 4 plays 80 yds 0:56 | 35 | 30 |

TEAM STATS

| | VT | NU |
|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Total First Downs..... | 21 | 14 |
| Rushing..... | 12 | 3 |
| Passing..... | 7 | 10 |
| Penalty..... | 2 | 1 |
| Rushing Attempts..... | 55 | 25 |
| Yards Gained Rushing..... | 224 | 79 |
| Yards Lost Rushing..... | 18 | 24 |
| Net Yards Rushing..... | 206 | 55 |
| Net Yards Passing..... | 171 | 278 |
| Passes Attempted..... | 15 | 26 |
| Passes Completed..... | 9 | 17 |
| Had Intercepted..... | 0 | 1 |
| Percent Completion..... | 60.0% | 65.4% |
| Yards per Attempt..... | 11.4 | 10.7 |
| Yards per Completion..... | 19.0 | 16.4 |
| Total Offensive Plays..... | 70 | 51 |
| Total Net Yards..... | 377 | 333 |
| Avg. Gain Per Play..... | 5.4 | 6.5 |
| Fumbles: No-Lost..... | 0-0 | 3-1 |
| Penalties: No-Yards..... | 4-30 | 7-69 |
| Punts: No-Yards..... | 5-173 | 5-147 |
| Avg. Per Punt..... | 34.6 | 29.4 |
| Avg. Net Punt..... | 17.8 | 16.8 |
| Punt Returns: No-Yards..... | 3-63 | 2-84 |
| Kickoff Returns: No-Yards..... | 4-94 | 7-147 |
| Interception Returns: No-Yards..... | 1-15 | 0-0 |
| Fumble Returns: No-Yards..... | 1-8 | 0-0 |
| Miscellaneous Yards..... | 0 | 0 |
| Possession Time..... | 34:44 | 25:16 |
| Third-Down Conversions..... | 7-17 | 2-11 |
| Percentage..... | 41.2% | 18.2% |
| Fourth-Down Conversions..... | 0-0 | 1-1 |
| Percentage..... | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| Sacks By: No-Yards..... | 2-11 | 2-4 |

OFFENSIVE INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

NEBRASKA

| Rushing | No | Gain | Lost | Net | Avg | TD | Lg |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Helu Jr. | 4 | 21 | 0 | 21 | 5.2 | 1 | 12 |
| Ganz | 8 | 29 | 11 | 18 | 2.2 | 0 | 8 |
| Lucky | 8 | 21 | 4 | 17 | 2.1 | 0 | 5 |
| Castille | 3 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 2.7 | 0 | 4 |
| TEAM | 1 | 0 | 3 | -3 | -3.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Paul | 1 | 0 | 6 | -6 | -6.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 25 | 79 | 24 | 55 | 2.2 | 1 | 12 |

| Passing | Att | Comp | % | Int | Yds | TD | Lg |
|---------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|----|----|
| Ganz | 26 | 17 | 65.4 | 1 | 278 | 2 | 46 |

| Receiving | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|--------------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| McNeill | 3 | 66 | 1 | 32 |
| Peterson | 4 | 60 | 1 | 25 |
| Swift | 3 | 58 | 0 | 46 |
| Lucky | 3 | 38 | 0 | 29 |
| Paul | 1 | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| Holt | 1 | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Young | 1 | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Gilleylen | 1 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Total | 17 | 278 | 2 | 46 |

| Punt Ret | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Swift | 1 | 88 | 1 | 88 |
| Paul | 1 | -4 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 2 | 84 | 1 | 88 |

| Kick Ret | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|--------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Paul | 6 | 121 | 0 | 28 |
| Gilleylen | 1 | 26 | 0 | 26 |
| Total | 7 | 147 | 0 | 28 |

| Punting | No | Avg | Lg | Blk | TB | FC | 50+ | In 20 |
|--------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Titchener | 4 | 36.8 | 41 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| TEAM | 1 | 0.0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 5 | 29.4 | 41 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| Field Goals | Made | Att | Lg | Blkd |
|-------------|------|-----|----|------|
| Henery | 1 | 1 | 48 | 0 |

| Defense | Solo | Ast | Tot | TFL | Sac | PD | FF | FR |
|-------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|
| Glenn | 2 | 12 | 14 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Dillard | 2 | 9 | 11 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Allen | 3 | 6 | 9 | 1-2 | 1-2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| O'Hanlon | 3 | 5 | 8 | 1-2 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Murillo | 5 | 2 | 7 | 1-1 | 0-0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Asante | 3 | 3 | 6 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Potter | 1 | 5 | 6 | 2-2 | 0-1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Steinkuhler | 1 | 5 | 6 | 0-1 | 0-1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Suh | 3 | 3 | 6 | 1-1 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Culbert | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Thenarse | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1-2 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Amukamara | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hagg | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1-5 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lawrence | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wortman | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cammack | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Castille | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Murtha | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sievers | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Thorell | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wald | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| West | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Interception Ret | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|------------------|----|-----|----|----|
| None | | | | |

VIRGINIA TECH

| Rushing | No | Gain | Lost | Net | Avg | TD | Lg |
|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Tyrod Taylor | 15 | 91 | 4 | 87 | 5.8 | 1 | 30 |
| Darren Evans | 21 | 75 | 3 | 72 | 3.4 | 2 | 19 |
| Kenny Lewis | 17 | 58 | 8 | 50 | 2.9 | 0 | 12 |
| Danny Coale | 1 | 0 | 1 | -1 | -1.0 | 0 | 0 |
| TEAM | 1 | 0 | 2 | -2 | -2.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 55 | 224 | 18 | 206 | 3.7 | 3 | 30 |

| Passing | Att | Comp | % | Int | Yds | TD | Lg |
|--------------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|----|----|
| Tyrod Taylor | 15 | 9 | 60.0 | 0 | 171 | 0 | 40 |

| Receiving | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|----------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Jarrett Boykin | 2 | 58 | 0 | 34 |
| Andre Smith | 2 | 54 | 0 | 40 |
| Greg Boone | 2 | 33 | 0 | 17 |
| Danny Coale | 2 | 14 | 0 | 8 |
| Dyrell Roberts | 1 | 12 | 0 | 12 |
| Total | 9 | 171 | 0 | 40 |

| Punt Ret | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Victor Harris | 2 | 49 | 0 | 28 |
| Stephan Virgil | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 3 | 63 | 0 | 28 |

| Kick Ret | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Kenny Lewis | 2 | 60 | 0 | 41 |
| Davon Morgan | 1 | 18 | 0 | 18 |
| Victor Harris | 1 | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| Total | 4 | 94 | 0 | 41 |

| Punting | No | Avg | Lg | Blk | TB | FC | 50+ | In 20 |
|--------------|----|------|----|-----|----|----|-----|-------|
| Brent Bowden | 5 | 34.6 | 47 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |

| Field Goals | Made | Att | Lg | Blkd |
|-------------|------|-----|----|------|
| Dustin Keys | 4 | 4 | 38 | 0 |

| Defense | Solo | Ast | Tot | TFL | Sac | PD | FF | FR |
|----------------|------|-----|-----|----------|-------|----|----|----|
| Jason Worilds | 4 | 3 | 7 | 2.5-6 | 0.5-1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| P. Sturdivant | 2 | 5 | 7 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Victor Harris | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1-6 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Stephan Virgil | 5 | 0 | 5 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Kam Chancellor | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Orion Martin | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1.5-10.5 | 1-10 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Brett Warren | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cam Martin | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Davon Morgan | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jacob Sykes | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| J. Housewright | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Matt Reidy | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cody Grimm | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| C. Thompson | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| D. Taylor | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Dorian Porch | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Jake Johnson | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| John Graves | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Justin Myer | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| L. Williams | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Interception Ret | No | Yds | TD | Lg |
|------------------|----|-----|----|----|
| Victor Harris | 1 | 15 | 0 | 15 |

NEBRASKA SEASON LEADERS

| Rushing | G | No | Gain | Lost | Net | Avg | TD | Lg | Yd/G |
|-------------------|---|----|------|------|-----|-----|----|----|------|
| Lucky, Marlon | 4 | 42 | 206 | 20 | 186 | 4.4 | 4 | 58 | 46.5 |
| Helu Jr., Roy | 4 | 27 | 171 | 7 | 164 | 6.1 | 2 | 27 | 41.0 |
| Ganz, Joe | 4 | 25 | 161 | 38 | 123 | 4.9 | 1 | 33 | 30.8 |
| Castille, Quentin | 4 | 25 | 100 | 5 | 95 | 3.8 | 1 | 17 | 23.8 |

| Passing | G | Att | Comp | % | Int | Yds | TD | Lg | Yd/G |
|---------------|---|-----|------|-------|-----|-----|----|----|-------|
| Ganz, Joe | 4 | 104 | 67 | 64.4 | 4 | 997 | 7 | 61 | 249.2 |
| Witt, Patrick | 2 | 6 | 4 | 66.7 | 0 | 40 | 0 | 23 | 20.0 |
| Lucky, Marlon | 4 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | 0 | 20 | 1 | 20 | 5.0 |
| Lee, Zac | 1 | 2 | 1 | 50.0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 5.0 |

| Receiving | G | No | Yds | Avg | TD | Lg | Yd/G |
|----------------|---|----|-----|------|----|----|------|
| Swift, Nate | 4 | 15 | 259 | 17.3 | 2 | 61 | 64.8 |
| Peterson, Todd | 4 | 15 | 187 | 12.5 | 1 | 25 | 46.8 |
| McNeill, Mike | 4 | 6 | 126 | 21.0 | 3 | 35 | 31.5 |
| Holt, Menelik | 4 | 8 | 103 | 12.9 | 0 | 25 | 25.8 |
| Lucky, Marlon | 4 | 8 | 94 | 11.8 | 1 | 29 | 23.5 |
| Young, Dreu | 4 | 2 | 65 | 32.5 | 0 | 55 | 16.2 |

| Int Ret | G | No | Yds | Avg | TD | Lg | Yd/G |
|------------------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Murillo, Armando | 4 | 1 | 57 | 57.0 | 0 | 57 | 14.2 |
| Suh, Ndamukong | 4 | 1 | 49 | 49.0 | 1 | 49 | 12.2 |
| West, Anthony | 3 | 1 | 26 | 26.0 | 0 | 26 | 8.7 |
| O'Hanlon, Matt | 4 | 1 | 21 | 21.0 | 0 | 21 | 5.2 |
| Potter, Zach | 4 | 1 | 11 | 11.0 | 0 | 11 | 2.8 |
| Total | 4 | 5 | 164 | 32.8 | 1 | 57 | 41.0 |

| Defense | Tack | TFL | Sack |
|-------------------|------|------|------|
| Glenn, Cody | 35 | 3-14 | 0-0 |
| Dillard, Phillip | 28 | 0-6 | 0-6 |
| Allen, Pierre | 23 | 3-11 | 1-2 |
| Murillo, Armando | 21 | 1-1 | 0-0 |
| Asante, Larry | 20 | 0-0 | 0-0 |
| O'Hanlon, Matt | 20 | 1-2 | 0-0 |
| Steinkuhler, Ty | 20 | 0-2 | 0-1 |
| Amukamara, Prince | 19 | 0-0 | 0-0 |
| Hagg, Eric | 19 | 1-5 | 0-0 |
| Suh, Ndamukong | 19 | 3-16 | 2-15 |
| Potter, Zach | 15 | 2-16 | 1-15 |



2008 NEBRASKA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--|-----------------|
| Sat., Aug. 30 | Western Michigan | Memorial Stadium | W, 47-24 |
| Sat., Sept. 6 | San Jose State | Memorial Stadium | W, 35-12 |
| Sat., Sept. 13 | New Mexico State | Memorial Stadium | W, 38-7 |
| Sat., Sept. 27 | Virginia Tech | Memorial Stadium | L, 30-35 |
| Sat., Oct. 4 | Missouri | Memorial Stadium | TBA |
| Sat., Oct. 11 | Texas Tech | at Lubbock, Texas | TBA |
| Sat., Oct. 18 | Iowa State | at Ames, Iowa | TBA |
| Sat., Oct. 25 | Baylor | Memorial Stadium | TBA |
| Sat., Nov. 1 | Oklahoma | at Norman, Okla. | TBA |
| Sat., Nov. 8 | Kansas | Memorial Stadium | TBA |
| Sat., Nov. 15 | Kansas State | at Manhattan, Kan. | TBA |
| Fri., Nov. 28 | Colorado | Memorial Stadium | 2:30 p.m. (ABC) |
| Sat., Dec. 6 | Big 12 Championship | at Kansas City, Mo. (Arrowhead Stadium) | 7 p.m. (ABC) |

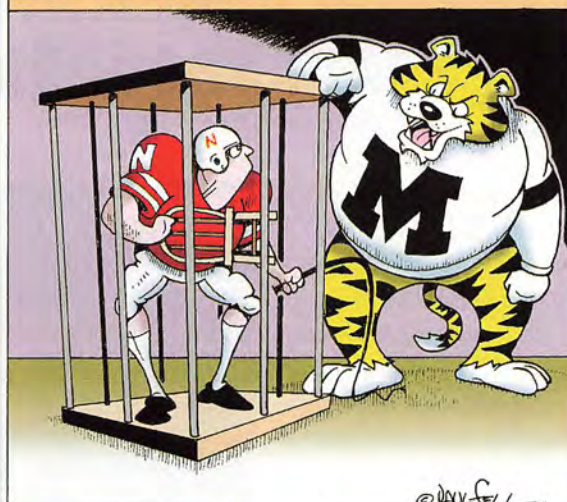
FAN OF THE GAME



Brian Stelzer, UNL Senior from Lamars, IA, makes some noise at the Virginia Tech game.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs. MISSOURI



OCTOBER 4, 2008
HUSKERS ARE IN FOR A REAL BATTLE WITH POWERFUL MIZZOU, BUT HOME FIELD ADVANTAGE JUST MIGHT WIN OUT IN THE END!

THIS WEEK'S PICKS



AARON BABCOCK, Editor

Last Week: (2-3)

Season: (13-6)

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Missouri @ Nebraska | MU 41-24 |
| Kansas @ Iowa State | KU 35-10 |
| Texas Tech @ Kansas State | TT 45-21 |
| Texas @ Colorado | UT 35-24 |
| Texas A&M @ Oklahoma State | OSU 42-10 |



MIKE BABCOCK, Contributing Editor

Last Week: (2-3)

Season: (15-4)

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Missouri @ Nebraska | MU 35-31 |
| Kansas @ Iowa State | KU 28-10 |
| Texas Tech @ Kansas State | TT 45-13 |
| Texas @ Colorado | UT 42-21 |
| Texas A&M @ Oklahoma State | OSU 38-17 |



TERRY DOUGLASS, Grand Island Independent

Last Week: (3-2)

Season: (15-4)

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Missouri @ Nebraska | MU 38-24 |
| Kansas @ Iowa State | KU 27-10 |
| Texas Tech @ Kansas State | TT 37-20 |
| Texas @ Colorado | UT 27-21 |
| Texas A&M @ Oklahoma State | OSU 45-13 |



MATT DAVISON, Husker Sports Network

Last Week: (2-3)

Season: (15-4)

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Missouri @ Nebraska | NU 5-3 |
| Kansas @ Iowa State | KU 35-17 |
| Texas Tech @ Kansas State | TT 42-21 |
| Texas @ Colorado | UT 33-21 |
| Texas A&M @ Oklahoma State | OSU 35-13 |



SEAN CALLAHAN, HuskersIllustrated.com

Last Week: (3-2)

Season: (12-2)

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Missouri @ Nebraska | MU 41-31 |
| Kansas @ Iowa State | KU 37-28 |
| Texas Tech @ Kansas State | TT 48-31 |
| Texas @ Colorado | UT 31-27 |
| Texas A&M @ Oklahoma State | OSU 45-31 |



Weatherspoon sparks Missouri secondary

BY STEVEN M. SIPPLE

HE SHOWED THE determination of a bona-fide team leader. He's clearly a player hungry to achieve at a high level.

That became evident this past spring when Missouri linebacker Sean Weatherspoon refused to miss practices even after suffering a torn labrum in his shoulder toward the middle of camp.

"I didn't feel like I was good enough to sit out," said the hard-hitting junior. "I thought there was a lot more work to be done, and I had to become a better football player."

The thing is, the 6-1, 235-pound Weatherspoon led the team in tackles last season with 130 and ranked second with eight pass breakups.

"But my goal was to get a lot more takeaways," he said, noting he had no interceptions. "I wanted to stay in there and go against (Missouri standout quarterback) Chase Daniel. I wanted to make more plays on the ball. So far this season, it's helped me out."

Indeed, Weatherspoon recorded three interceptions in Missouri's first three games -- all wins -- and returned two of his picks for touchdowns. He again was leading the team in tackles. You might say he's playing at a level befitting a player who appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated's* preseason college football edition along with teammates Daniel and wideout Jeremy Maclin.



The *Sports Illustrated* cover is indicative of Missouri becoming prominent in the nation's sporting consciousness. The Tigers finished 12-2 last season, including 7-1 in the Big 12, and now frequently are mentioned as a leading national championship contender.

When people ponder Missouri football, initial thoughts usually go something like this: The Tigers have an outstanding offense, and their defense is pretty good, too.

Weatherspoon, a 2007 All-Big 12 selection, is helping push Mizzou's defense to a higher level.

"We're definitely trying to step our game up to a point where it's somewhere close to the offense," he said. "We've been doing a lot better. By the end of the season last year, we were doing a heck of a lot better."

Missouri shut down Arkansas, 38-7, in the Cotton Bowl and finished the season

ranked 59th nationally in total defense and 37th in points allowed (23.3 per game). This season, after a 52-42 win against Illinois in the opener, the Tigers' defense settled down in wins against Southeast Missouri State (52-3) and Nevada (69-17). Mizzou played Buffalo on Sept. 10 in Columbia, Mo.

"I think at times we've been dominant," Weatherspoon said. "At other times, we've had some letdowns here and there, a couple things we wish we could have back. But compared to last year, we're playing a lot better than we were at this time last year."

"We're mixing in some young guys here and there and just trying to find our gelling point. I think we have the opportunity to be a pretty good defense. Hopefully we'll get better every weekend. We want to get to a place where when you think of Missouri, you don't just think about Chase Daniel and all the touchdown passes. I mean, you might think a little about some

COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI MEDIA RELATIONS



MISSOURI
QUICK FACTS

Head coach: Gary Pinkel
(eighth season as head coach at Missouri, 18th overall)
Enrollment: 27,070
Colors: Old Gold and Black
Conference: Big 12
2007 record: 12-2 (7-1 Big 12)
Starters returning/lost: 17/7
Series record: Nebraska leads 65-35

2008 SCHEDULE
8/30 vs. Illinois, W 52-42
9/6 SE Missouri State, W 52-3
9/13 Nevada, W 69-17
9/20 Buffalo
10/4 at Nebraska
10/11 Oklahoma State
10/18 at Texas
10/25 Colorado
11/1 at Baylor
11/8 Kansas State
11/15 at Iowa State
11/29 vs. Kansas

guys on defense that can make some plays."

LOOKING BACK

Missouri's national title hopes will hinge on ending a 30-year curse that has not seen the Tigers win in Lincoln since 1978.

All Big-8 tight end Kellen Winslow spoiled a record day by Rich Berns who rushed for a single-game record 255 yards and two touchdowns on 35 carries and also became Nebraska's all-time leading rusher. **N**

MISSOURI ROSTER

| # | QUARTERBACKS | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 12 | Jimmy Costello | QB | 6-2 | 205 | RSFr. |
| 10 | Chase Daniel | QB | 6-1 | 225 | Sr. |
| 11 | Blaine Gabbert | QB | 6-5 | 225 | Fr. |
| 14 | Chase Patton | QB | 6-5 | 220 | Sr. |
| 3 | Luther Rweton | QB | 6-1 | 197 | Fr. |

| # | OFFENSIVE LINE | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 62 | Tim Barnes | OL | 6-4 | 305 | So. |
| 67 | J.T. Beasley | OL | 6-4 | 285 | RSFr. |
| 61 | Colin Brown | OL | 6-8 | 325 | Sr. |
| 79 | Taylor Davis | OL | 6-5 | 270 | Fr. |
| 58 | Brendan Donaldson | OL | 6-2 | 285 | RSFr. |
| 72 | Elvis Fisher | OL | 6-5 | 290 | RSFr. |
| 78 | Kurtis Gregory | OL | 6-5 | 305 | Jr. |
| 77 | Dan Hoch | OL | 6-7 | 295 | Fr. |
| 55 | Daniel Jenkins | OL | 6-4 | 290 | Fr. |
| 74 | Kirk Lakebrink | OL | 6-5 | 320 | So. |
| 57 | Brad Madison | OL | 6-5 | 255 | Fr. |
| 76 | Ryan Madison | OL | 6-5 | 305 | Sr. |
| 69 | Kevin Mansco | OL | 6-1 | 245 | So. |
| 71 | Jayson Palmgren | OL | 6-3 | 305 | RSFr. |
| 65 | Mike Prince | OL | 6-4 | 300 | So. |
| 53 | Travis Ruth | OL | 6-3 | 300 | Fr. |
| 63 | Ryan Schleusner | OL | 6-3 | 270 | So. |
| 68 | Dain Wise | OL | 6-5 | 305 | Jr. |
| 66 | Austin Wuebbels | OL | 6-4 | 285 | RSFr. |

| # | RUNNING BACKS | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|--------------------|-----|------|-----|-------|
| 35 | Matt Davis | TB | 6-1 | 185 | So. |
| 1 | Jimmy Jackson | TB | 5-9 | 200 | Sr. |
| 26 | De'Von Moore | TB | 5-9 | 195 | RSFr. |
| 46 | Shawn Scott | TB | 5-8 | 185 | Jr. |
| 17 | Drew Temple | TB | 5-10 | 190 | Fr. |
| 24 | Derrick Washington | TB | 5-11 | 215 | So. |

| # | RECEIVERS | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|--------------------|-----|------|-----|-------|
| 86 | Beau Brinkley | TE | 6-5 | 220 | Fr. |
| 45 | Chase Coffman | TE | 6-6 | 245 | Sr. |
| 43 | Jon Gissinger | TE | 6-3 | 240 | Jr. |
| 87 | Andrew Jones | TE | 6-5 | 230 | Fr. |
| 93 | Andy Loyd | TE | 6-4 | 240 | So. |
| 48 | Caleb Medley | TE | 6-4 | 205 | RSFr. |
| 81 | Danario Alexander | WR | 6-5 | 210 | Jr. |
| 28 | Adam Casey | WR | 6-1 | 195 | Sr. |
| 80 | Terry Dennis | WR | 6-3 | 200 | RSFr. |
| 82 | Michael Egnaw | WR | 6-5 | 210 | Fr. |
| 16 | Brandon Gerau | WR | 6-1 | 170 | RSFr. |
| 7 | Earl Goldsmith | WR | 5-9 | 200 | Sr. |
| 29 | Jerrell Jackson | WR | 6-2 | 180 | Fr. |
| 9 | Wes Kemp | WR | 6-4 | 225 | Fr. |
| 8 | Jeremy MacLin | WR | 6-1 | 200 | So. |
| 3 | Gahn McGaffie | WR | 5-11 | 180 | Fr. |
| 4 | Jared Perry | WR | 6-1 | 180 | Jr. |
| 36 | Tyrone Reece | WR | 5-10 | 190 | Jr. |
| 84 | Tommy Saunders | WR | 6-1 | 210 | Sr. |
| 88 | Forrest Shock | WR | 6-1 | 205 | So. |
| 2 | La'Roderick Thomas | WR | 6-1 | 195 | So. |
| 5 | Rolandis Woodland | WR | 6-5 | 185 | Fr. |

| # | DEFENSIVE LINE | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 2 | Brian Coulter | DE | 6-4 | 250 | Jr. |
| 96 | Jaron Baston | DL | 6-1 | 300 | Jr. |
| 91 | Jimmy Burge | DL | 6-2 | 280 | Fr. |
| 48 | Tommy Chavis | DL | 6-2 | 255 | Sr. |
| 98 | Bart Coslet | DL | 6-5 | 250 | So. |
| 95 | Chris Earnhardt | DL | 6-5 | 240 | RSFr. |
| 90 | Dominique Hamilton | DL | 6-6 | 285 | RSFr. |
| 94 | Evander Hood | DL | 6-4 | 295 | Fr. |
| 97 | Marcus Malbrough | DL | 6-5 | 225 | Fr. |
| 92 | Andy Maples | DL | 6-4 | 300 | Jr. |
| 59 | Zach Milligan | DL | 6-1 | 225 | So. |
| 93 | Terrell Resonno | DL | 6-6 | 285 | RSFr. |
| 64 | Joe Schumacher | DL | 6-1 | 245 | Jr. |
| 85 | Aldon Smith | DL | 6-5 | 235 | Fr. |
| 53 | Jacques Smith | DL | 6-4 | 225 | Fr. |
| 38 | Stryker Sulak | DL | 6-5 | 250 | Sr. |

| # | DEFENSIVE BACKS | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|-----------------|-----|------|-----|-------|
| 21 | Castine Bridges | DB | 6-2 | 210 | Sr. |
| 9 | Kip Edwards | DB | 6-1 | 185 | Fr. |
| 19 | Carl Gettis | DB | 5-11 | 200 | So. |
| 31 | Trey Hobson | DB | 5-11 | 185 | RSFr. |
| 13 | Kenji Jackson | DB | 5-10 | 200 | Fr. |
| 7 | Munir Prince | DB | 5-10 | 185 | Jr. |
| 20 | Kevin Rutland | DB | 6-1 | 190 | So. |
| 28 | Evan Scott | DB | 6-3 | 185 | Fr. |
| 22 | Robert Steeples | DB | 6-1 | 190 | Fr. |
| 11 | Tru Vaughns | DB | 5-9 | 170 | Sr. |
| 24 | Mack Breed | S | 6-1 | 205 | Sr. |
| 8 | Justin Garrett | S | 6-2 | 200 | Sr. |
| 40 | Zaviar Gooden | S | 6-2 | 210 | Fr. |
| 15 | Del Howard | S | 5-11 | 200 | Jr. |
| 1 | William Moore | S | 6-1 | 230 | Sr. |
| 10 | Gilbert Moye | S | 6-2 | 215 | RSFr. |
| 4 | Hardy Ricks | S | 6-1 | 190 | Jr. |

| # | LINEBACKERS | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 5 | Van Alexander | LB | 6-1 | 235 | Sr. |
| 34 | Brock Christopher | LB | 6-2 | 235 | Sr. |
| 39 | Tyler Crane | LB | 6-3 | 225 | So. |
| 32 | Will Ebner | LB | 6-1 | 225 | Fr. |
| 54 | Cornell Ellis | LB | 5-9 | 220 | Fr. |
| 30 | Caleb Freeman | LB | 6-2 | 205 | Fr. |
| 6 | Andrew Gachkar | LB | 6-3 | 220 | So. |
| 45 | Marlon Galbreath | LB | 6-2 | 215 | So. |
| 35 | Jeff Gettys | LB | 6-3 | 225 | So. |
| 33 | Luke Lambert | LB | 6-3 | 225 | So. |
| 25 | Aaron O'Neal | LB | 6-3 | 220 | Sr. |
| 18 | Steve Redmond | LB | 6-1 | 230 | Sr. |
| 12 | Sean Weatherspoon | LB | 6-1 | 235 | Jr. |
| 52 | George White | LB | 6-2 | 250 | Fr. |

| # | KICKERS | >>> | HT | WT | YR. |
|----|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| 91 | Tanner Mills | K/P | 6-2 | 195 | Jr. |
| 95 | Grant Ressel | K/P | 6-1 | 180 | RSFr. |
| 36 | Jake Harry | P | 6-1 | 190 | Jr. |
| 97 | Trey Barrow | PK | 6-3 | 175 | Fr. |
| 99 | Jeff Wolfert | PK | 6-2 | 185 | Sr. |

NEBRASKA TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

| OFFENSE | | | | | |
|---------|----|--------------|-----|-----|-----|
| WR | 87 | Swift, Nate | 6-2 | 200 | Sr. |
| | 4 | Menelik Holt | 6-4 | 220 | Jr. |
| | 8 | Will Henry | 6-5 | 220 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| LT | 65 | Smith, Mike | 6-6 | 285 | So. |
| | 72 | Jaivorio Burkes | 6-5 | 325 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| LG | 61 | Mike Huff | 6-4 | 300 | Sr. |
| | 68 | Keith Williams | 6-5 | 305 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|---|----|---------------|-----|-----|------|
| C | 67 | Jacob Hickman | 6-4 | 290 | Jr. |
| | 58 | Mike Caputo | 6-1 | 275 | RFr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------|-----|-----|-----|
| RG | 70 | Matt Slauson | 6-5 | 320 | Sr. |
| | 73 | D.J. Jones | 6-5 | 305 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---------------|-----|-----|------|
| RT | 76 | Murtha, Lydon | 6-7 | 315 | Sr. |
| | 78 | Marcel Jones | 6-7 | 310 | RFr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| TE | 44 | Mike McNeill | 6-4 | 240 | So. |
| | 49 | Dreu Young | 6-4 | 245 | So. |
| | 89 | Hunter Teafattiller | 6-3 | 240 | Sr. |

| | | | | | |
|------|----|--------------------|-----|-----|------|
| WR | 17 | Todd Peterson | 6-4 | 215 | Sr. |
| | 24 | Niles Paul | 6-1 | 210 | So. |
| (or) | 11 | Curenski Gilleylen | 6-0 | 210 | RFr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------|-----|-----|------|
| QB | 12 | Joe Ganz | 6-1 | 210 | Sr. |
| | 2 | Patrick Witt | 6-4 | 225 | RFr. |
| | 3 | Zac Lee | 6-2 | 210 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|------|----|------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| IB | 5 | Marlon Lucky | 6-0 | 215 | Sr. |
| (or) | 10 | Roy Helu Jr. | 6-0 | 215 | So. |
| (or) | 29 | Quentin Castille | 6-1 | 235 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| FB | 36 | Thomas Lawson | 6-0 | 250 | Sr. |
| | 45 | Justin Makovicka | 6-1 | 240 | So. |

| DEFENSE | | | | | |
|---------|----|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| DE | 98 | Zach Potter | 6-7 | 280 | Sr. |
| | 88 | Clayton Sievers | 6-4 | 255 | Sr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|------------------|-----|-----|------|
| NT | 93 | Ndamukong Suh | 6-4 | 300 | Jr. |
| | 56 | Shukree Barfield | 6-4 | 290 | Sr. |
| | 90 | Terrence Moore | 6-3 | 275 | RFr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|----------------|-----|-----|------|
| DT | 43 | Ty Steinkuhler | 6-3 | 280 | Sr. |
| | 94 | Jared Crick | 6-6 | 280 | RFr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| DE | 95 | Pierre Allen | 6-5 | 265 | So. |
| | 96 | Cameron Meredith | 6-4 | 235 | Fr. |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----|----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| WLB | 34 | Cody Glenn | 6-0 | 235 | Sr. |
| | 40 | Blake Lawrence | 6-3 | 225 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|
| MLB | 52 | Phillip Dillard | 6-1 | 235 | Jr. |
| | 51 | Will Compton | 6-2 | 230 | Fr. |
| | 54 | Colton Koehler | 6-1 | 230 | Jr. |

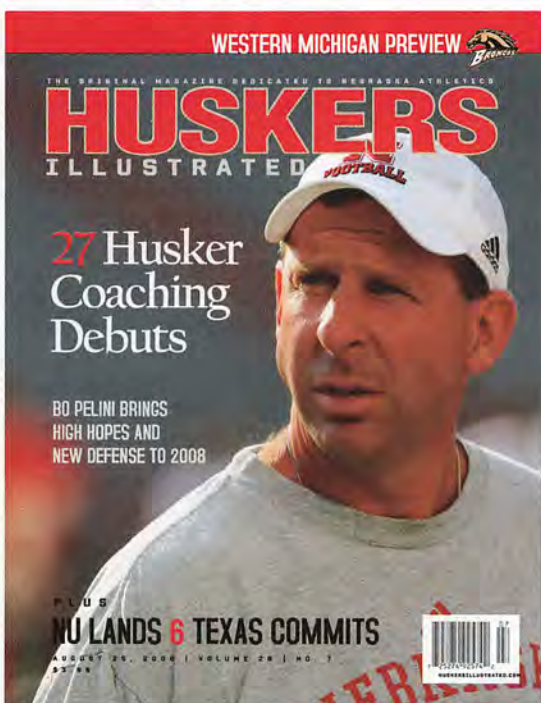
| | | | | | |
|-----|----|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| BLB | 53 | Tyler Wortman | 6-3 | 235 | Sr. |
| | 42 | Sean Fisher | 6-6 | 225 | Fr. |
| | 7 | Latravis Washington | 6-3 | 225 | So. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|------------------|-----|-----|------|
| RC | 5 | Anthony West | 6-0 | 200 | So. |
| | 21 | Prince Amukamara | 6-1 | 195 | So. |
| | 23 | Lance Thorell | 6-1 | 190 | RFr. |

| | | | | | |
|----|----|-----------------|------|-----|-----|
| LC | 6 | Armando Murillo | 6-0 | 190 | Sr. |
| | 28 | Eric Hagg | 6-1 | 200 | So. |
| | 15 | Alfonzo Dennard | 5-10 | 190 | Fr. |

| | | | | | |
|------|----|-----------------|------|-----|-----|
| SS | 4 | Larry Asante | 6-1 | 210 | Jr. |
| | 2 | Major Culbert | 6-0 | 205 | Jr. |
| FS | 3 | Rickey Thenarse | 6-0 | 195 | Jr. |
| (or) | 33 | Matt O'Hanlon | 5-11 | 195 | Jr. |

HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



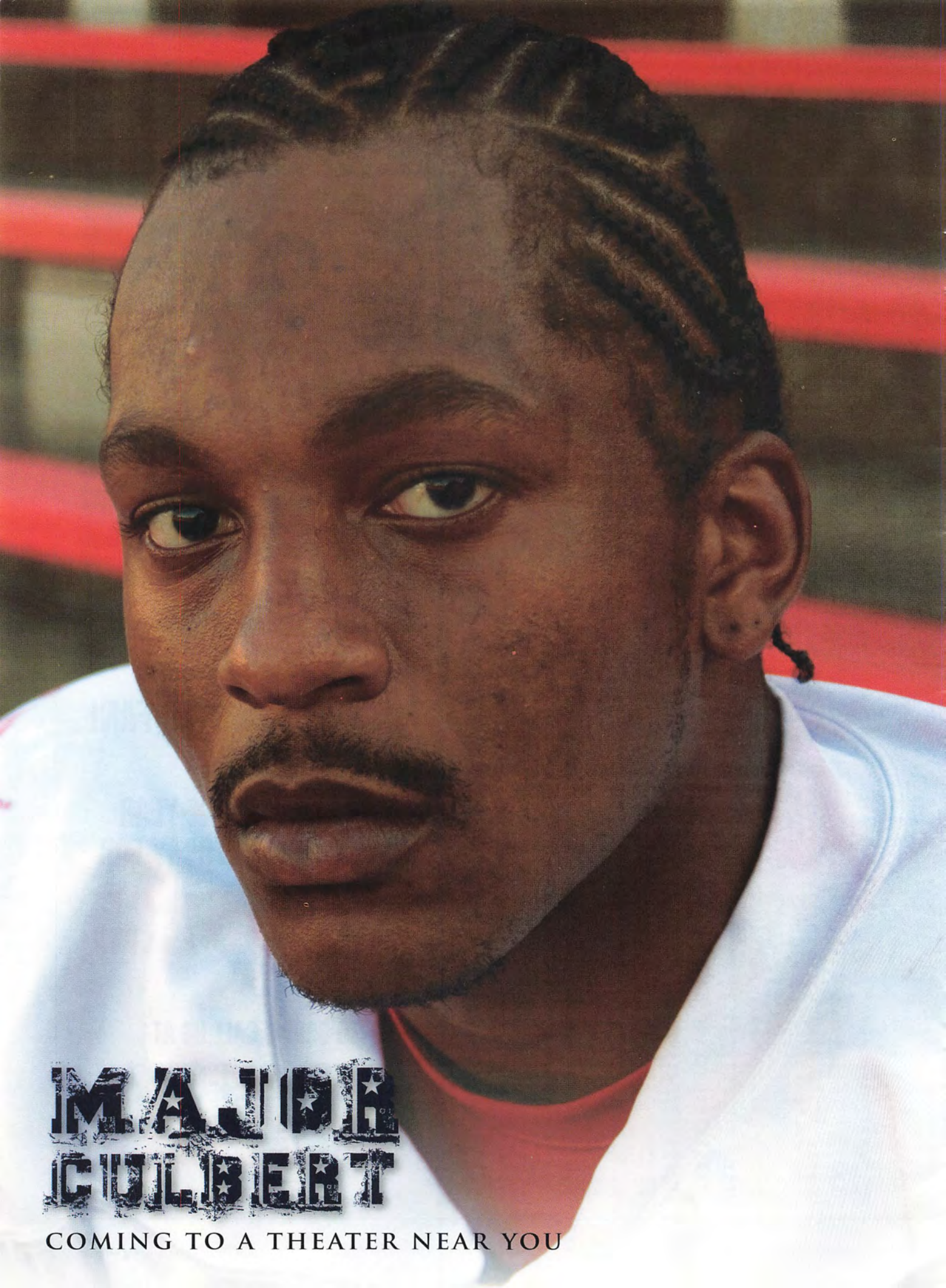
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**MAJOR
CULBERT**

COMING TO A THEATER NEAR YOU

Culbert at home when on stage

by Brian Rosenthal

Most football coaches will have players study playbooks in their spare time. If there's ever any mention of a script,

it's usually those first 10 or 15 plays handed out the night before a game. Any talk of being "on stage" usually means there's a big game coming up that will garner much media attention, and probably has huge implications in a conference race.

Scripts and stages, however, took on a different meaning for Major Culbert when he played high school football. That was partly because of an assistant coach who would have Culbert do something other than simply study a playbook while the two traveled together to passing leagues in the offseason.

While coach Bobby Hosea drove the car, he would have Culbert, in the passenger's seat, look at a movie script. It wasn't just any script, either. These were important lines. More specifically, they were Hosea's lines.

Not only was Hosea a defensive backs coach at Nathaniel Narbonne High School in California, he was also an actor. Still is, in fact.

"I used to look at his script, and he would read it off to me," Culbert said. "I'd look at the lines, and he'd perform his scripts while he was driving."

Hosea played defensive back at UCLA. His senior season, he was named the team's Most Inspirational Player. He began his acting career in 1984, appearing in television shows such as "Benson" and "Perfect Strangers." Culbert is particularly fond of Hosea's work in "Fresh Prince of Bel Air," and also noted his work in "Law and Order."

On the big screen, Hosea played O.J. Simpson in "The O.J. Simpson Story." He's appeared in "DC Sniper: 23 Days of Fear," "The Veteran," "Under Heavy Fire," and

many other films.

"He's one of my idols I live up to," Culbert said.

Some day, Culbert, a junior safety on the Nebraska football team, would like to follow Hosea's lead, so to speak.

Culbert, a native of Harbor City, Calif., is majoring in communication studies. His major, at one time, was theater arts. He had to switch majors, he said, because football was conflicting too much with his previous class schedule.

"Bummer," Culbert said. "I wish I was (a theater major) though. That's my dream. I love doing it. Hopefully in the future I can go to grad school, do theater, if not the NFL. I'd do that. It's still a dream of mine."



"I DON'T
really want anybody
from the team to come
see me perform. Then
I'll freeze up. I tell
people back home, but I
don't want teammates."

MAJOR CULBERT

He remembers one theater class in college when he had to perform a monologue. He chose actor Denzel Washington's speech in "Remember the Titans," when Washington, playing coach Herman Boone, addressed his team.

"When you put yourself in that image," Culbert said, "you tend to block out everything else and just put yourself in that state of mind."

In high school, Culbert acted in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet."

"I did all kinds of stuff in high school," Culbert said. "I was in a lot of drama. I took drama as a class in high school. I got a lot of little pointers, about how to line up on stage, how not to turn my back to the audience, how to project my voice, stuff like that. That helped me a lot, too."

During his freshman year at Nebraska, Culbert was a cast member in "Westside Story." Culbert emphasizes, however, that he's not a singer; still, he somehow managed.

"Nah, I don't sing," he said. "I know it's a musical, but I don't see myself as a singer."

Not that anybody on the football team could judge. Culbert kept a low profile about his appearance on stage, saying he didn't want teammates in the audience. Guys like Menelik Holt, Jaivorio Burkes, Rickey Thenarse, Armando Murillo, Anthony West and Quentin Castille know of Culbert's experience in acting.

"I mean, he's a goofy guy," said Holt, who's roomed with Culbert since the two arrived in Lincoln three years ago. "We both are. Part of being a funny person is acting out a lot, and we say funny things all the time."

That doesn't mean Holt, or others, are freely invited to come see Culbert.

"I don't really want anybody from the team to come see me perform," Culbert said. "Then I'll freeze up. I tell people back home, but I don't want teammates."

Culbert smiles.

"They'd probably make fun of me or something."

Culbert said he still speaks periodically with Hosea. He calls his former coach a “big inspiration” in his life, saying he was like a father.

Culbert grew up without a dad. He wasn’t even a year old when his father was killed in a motorcycle accident.

“All of my coaches, I’d look at like a father figure, and he was one of them,” Culbert said of Hosea.

Culbert also keeps in contact with his godfather, Orlando Pile, whom Culbert has known since he was 10.

“I look at him like one of my guardian angels,” he said. “I call him ‘Dad’ and everything. I call him, and I just pray (when times are tough). That’s all I can do.”

Culbert grew up with his mother, Renee. While she worked, Culbert would stay at his grandmother’s.

“She just taught me everything,” Culbert said.

One of those things: cooking. If the NFL or the theater doesn’t work out, Culbert said he’s also contemplated culinary school.

“It was just watching my mom and my grandma, watching her bake all the time, watching her cook and everything,” said Culbert, whose grandmother died last fall. “I was always in the kitchen.”

Culbert said he enjoys baking – cookies from scratch, brownies, sweet potato pie, and cakes. When it comes to cooking, Culbert said he likes preparing a variety of dishes.

“I like to do it all,” he said. “I can’t name all of (the dishes) off the top of my head right now.”

Culbert said Mexican food is probably his specialty – burritos and refried beans, in particular.

“He told you that?” Holt said, laughing. “I guess he’s so-so. Anybody can make boxed food, some macaroni and cheese.

“He’s made Hamburger Helper a couple of times. I can remember that.”

Holt then admits that Culbert may have made a meal or two last summer. During the season, visits to the training table are far more common.

“We won’t starve to death,” Holt said.

Holt said he and Culbert hang out together pretty much everywhere they go – except, of course, when theater is involved. Holt confirms that he’s not seen Culbert on stage.

“I think he did some stuff in class, but I had class at the same time,” Holt said. “I know he wants to do a lot with acting and cooking. He’s trying to reach his hand in a little bit of everything. Hopefully, one day, I’ll get to see him on stage.”

When and where seem uncertain. Culbert said he’s not particular about his role, or what type of movie or TV show he’d be involved with.

He just wants the opportunity to fulfill his dream.

“I see myself on the Disney Channel, for the kids, you know,” he said. “Maybe a couple of movies. It don’t matter, really. I just want to do it. Action movie, drama movie, funny movie.

“I think I’ve got a great ability to do it all. I just hope everything works out as planned in the future.” **N**

Culbert played “Joker” in 2006 Missouri game

Major Culbert is a fan of movies and the theater.

But mention the word “Joker,” and even Culbert may have to bypass talk of Heath Ledger’s performance in “The Dark Knight” and begin discussing a different topic.

For Culbert, there’s an entirely different story. He, too, played “Joker” – only on a football field, not as the villain in a “Batman” movie.

It was the specific name of Culbert’s position two years ago, when he played as a hybrid linebacker in Nebraska’s 34-20 victory over Missouri in Lincoln.

“My role was pretty easy,” Culbert said recently, recalling the 2006 game. “Just spy the quarterback. Wherever he goes, I go. I did that pretty well, I believe.”

Indeed. Culbert had six tackles, and helped limit Missouri quarterback Chase Daniel to 13 yards on nine carries.

“I remember just jumping around, having fun,” Culbert said. “Everybody was having fun that game, and we got a win.”

With linebackers Corey McKeon and Steve Octavien sidelined with injuries, embattled defensive coordinator Kevin Cosgrove inserted Culbert in a “30” defense. Culbert played as a linebacker in the middle of a 3-3-5 alignment.

It was the first time Culbert had ever played linebacker, in high school or college. Culbert, though, was an eager freshman, willing to do whatever it took to get on the field.

Perhaps Culbert’s biggest stop in that game was a tackle of running back Tony Temple on a third-and-10 option play that gained 5 yards deep in Nebraska territory. That limited the Tigers to a field goal attempt.

“The Missouri game is always in the back of my head,” said Culbert, a junior safety from Harbor City, Calif. “I played exceptionally well. I was a true freshman.”

To this day, the Missouri game is Culbert’s most productive, most memorable performance in a Husker uniform.

“I think about that a lot,” he said.

By the end of the 2006 season, Culbert was taking snaps at running back. He remained on offense through spring and early fall of 2007 before switching to linebacker midway through last season.

With a new coaching staff, Culbert has found what he believes is a true home at safety. He’s been slowed, though, by an ankle injury.

“Athletes, they go through trials and tribulation,” Culbert said, “and eventually I’ll get back on the field.”

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MOLLY HILL



SOFTBALL

Hill aims to return to previous dominance

BY TOMMY DAHLK

Senior Molly Hill doesn't really like talking too much about last season.

Nobody can really blame her.

If there is such a thing as a third-year slump or junior jinx, Hill had it a year ago.

As a freshman in 2006, Hill went 18-2. In 2007, Hill's sophomore stats were even more impressive. She went 17-9 and boasted a 1.05 ERA, the seventh lowest in the nation.

Last season was a far different story. As a junior, Hill posted a 3.27 ERA and gave up 191 hits in 190.2 innings. She also walked 98 batters.

She finally turned it around in the Big 12 tournament and gave some of her best

starts of the year. But still, what caused the struggles last year?

Before the season, Hill had surgery on a torn meniscus in her knee and missed the first few games. This had nothing to do with it, however, she said.

According to head coach Rhonda Revelle, Hill simply was in a slump and had to work out her problems in games because the Huskers needed her to pitch.

"A hitter goes through ups and downs," Revelle said. "But the thing about it with a hitter, they can have eight other hitters bail them out. When Molly had to throw so many innings last year, it just was exposed when she was not having her best games."

In many of her starts, Hill was un-hittable for about four or five of the innings. But for the other couple of innings in the starts, it

was as if opposing teams were trying to hit a beach ball.

Hill said this all stemmed from her getting behind in the count. Getting behind in the count caused her to rely too much on her fastball and gave hitters favorable pitches when they're ahead.

Getting behind in the count also caused Hill to surrender 98 walks. Revelle said that the walks were the killer.

"If you look at the things that riddled her last year, it wasn't that she got hit hard," Revelle said. "It's that she gave up more free bases via walks than she'd like to."

Hill has worked hard in the off-season to improve her command and has developed some pitches that can help her get ahead.

Now, entering the fall season, Hill is fully healthy and said she is throwing strikes that start over the plate and have good movement. Throwing those types of pitches is what she wants to get back to doing.

"I'm just trying to be really aggressive and not to avoid an at-bat," Hill said. "I'm trying to go right at hitters and be aggressive." **N**



HUSKER QUICK HITS

MARY KATE BIRD



SUCCESSFUL START

The Husker women's golf team climbed from third to a tie for first in the final round before losing a two-hole playoff to Oral Roberts at the 16-team Marilyn Smith/Sunflower Invitational in Lawrence, Kan.

Nebraska junior **KATE WHITE** shot 78 on the final day to finish at 229, good for a fourth-place tie individually. Junior **JC STEVENSON** had the Huskers' best round on the final day, at 73 – for a 234 total and 14th-place tie.

Coach **ROBIN KRAPFL**'s team opened the fall schedule by winning its own Chip-N Club Invitational. Sophomore **MARY KATE BIRD** shot a one-under-par 215 to finish second individually. Nebraska's B team finished sixth in the 13-team field.

The Husker men's team finished in an eighth-place tie at the Kansas Invitational in Lawrence, Kan., in mid-September. Sophomore **MIKE COATMAN** finished 11th, with a 3-over-par total of 219 in the 16-team field.

FALL CLASSIC

MOLLY HILL pitched a pair of two-hit shutouts and earned a save as the Nebraska softball team went 4-0 in its Fall Classic. The Huskers defeated Nebraska-Omaha and Augustana twice each, not allowing a run. Their first game against Augustana

ended 8-0 in five innings. The other games were all 1-0 in seven innings.

Sophomore right-hander **TORI TYSON** and junior **ALEX HUPP** earned the other pitching victories. Tyson went the distance, allowing four hits against Augustana. Hupp went five innings in the final game against UNO.

The Huskers are scheduled to finish their brief fall schedule in the Hawkeye Fall Classic at Iowa City on Oct. 4-5.

TURNAROUND

After starting the season 0-4, the Nebraska soccer team put together a five-match unbeaten streak going into Big 12 play. The 4-4-1 Huskers were scheduled to open their conference schedule against Kansas in Lincoln on the day before the Virginia Tech football game.

CHAMPS AGAIN

The Husker women's cross country team won the Woody Greeno/Husker Invitational for a fourth consecutive season, while the Husker men finished second to Butler Community College by a scant three points.

Sophomore **LARA CROFFORD** led the women with a second-place finish, running the 6K course in 21:32. Junior **RACHEL CARRIZALES** finished fifth.

Redshirted freshman **DAVID ADAMS** led the men's team, finishing eighth overall.

Volleyball

KORI COOPER

BY BOB HAMAR

Cooper excels, embraces new challenge

Nebraska volleyball public address announcer Steve Johnsen gets into it when Kori Cooper gets a kill. "Kill by Kori Cooooooper! Assist by Sydney Anderson."

It's a call the Huskers and their fans will hear a lot this season as Cooper, a 6-2 middle blocker, and Anderson, the new Husker setter this season, get better acquainted with each other.

It has gone pretty well so far. Cooper was averaging 2.2 kills per game while hitting .442 through the first eight matches of the season.

The Huskers need that production from Cooper because she has some big shoes to fill this season. The junior middle from Amarillo, Texas, is filling the M-1 position this season. That's a spot that was manned by All-American Tracy Stalls last year.

Nebraska coach John Cook said Cooper is getting the job done.

"She's trying to replace Tracy Stalls' position and I think she's doing a great job of it," Cook said. "She's hitting for a very high percentage. Sydney Anderson is very comfortable forcing her the ball. We're taking a lot of risks setting her the ball which is good because it keeps the other team from loading up on the outside hitters.

"She's a very smart player, a coach's kid so she understands game plans and she's right on with our game plans."

Last year, Cooper averaged 2.31 kills per set



and hit .356 playing the M-2 position. Her kills per set may be down, but that is also a byproduct of the sets being shortened from 30 points to 25.

"It is a little different," Cooper said of playing the M-1 spot. "I have Sydney in the front row so I'm running a lot more behinds. I like going off one foot so it's really helpful to me."

The M-1 is the middle who is next to the setter in the rotation. That may not mean much to the casual observer, but Cook said it's a big change for a player in some ways.

Last year, Cooper played two rotations in the front row with 6-5 four-time first team All-American Sarah Pavan next to her. This year, she plays two rotations with Anderson alongside her in the front row.

"You're going to get more attempts because you're up there with the setter twice," Cook said of the M-1. "Potentially you're going to have two blockers on you more because there are only two hitters.

"When you're M-2, you have two hitters on the outside of you so you kind of get lost a little bit more."

Cook has looked for ways to challenge Cooper in practices to get her ready for the pressure of playing the M-1 spot.

"We put three blockers on her in practice and say, 'Get out of this,'" Cook said. "She's been doing a great job."

Cooper doesn't take any of the credit for her play. She'd rather deflect that to her teammates.

"I think my improvement is a product of how the players around me are playing," Cooper said. "It's a different feel out there, but I've worked really hard to get ready to play."

Cook says Cooper understands her role this season. It's different from last year when she was a sophomore with seniors Pavan, Stalls and Christina Houghtelling there to take over leadership responsibilities.

"When you have three seniors and one junior, your older players need to step up," Cook said. "Kori is the one junior on our team. I think she understands that she has to be a playmaker for us. Again, she's embracing that and she goes after it."

With different players on the court,

including a new setter, the Huskers are playing at a different tempo this year. It's a tempo that suits Cooper just fine.

"It's a different group of people out there so it's hard to compare the two," Cooper said. "We're just really trying to be up quick, not really compared to last year, but just beating the teams on the other side of the net."

The biggest key for getting Cooper and M-2 Amanda Gates into the offense is the passing game. The Huskers have passed well this season, and need to continue that trend to keep the middles involved in the offense.

If the pass is off, then the setter doesn't have nearly as many options and usually will go to the outside hitter instead of the middle.

"We're really there on first contact," Cooper said. "When we have our passers putting the ball right on top of Sydney's head, she can do whatever she wants with the ball. I think our passing has been really good and allowed us to be really versatile with our

attacking."

The Huskers rolled through the preseason portion of their schedule unbeaten and were 10-0 after beating No. 3 Texas on Sept. 20. Cooper said they couldn't have asked for a better start to the season.

Now they just have to keep it going.

"We just have to keep getting better every day," Cooper said. "Keep working on our first contacts. It's just the little things, the details that we have to take care of."

THE RATINGS GAME

The Huskers have been tremendously successful throughout the history of the program. In fact, they have been ranked in every poll since the rankings began back in 1982.

That's now 372 straight times that the Huskers have been ranked. The only other school to hold that distinction is Stanford.

Nebraska has now been ranked in the top 10 for 339 weeks, trailing only Stanford with 343 appearances in the top 10.

FRESHMAN REDSHIRTS?

Freshmen **KAITLYNN JAMES** and **ALLISON MCNEAL** had not seen action through the first 10 matches of the season. Cook said he's planning to redshirt McNeal, a 6-3 middle blocker, this season as she learns under the tutelage of former Husker All-American **TRACY STALLS**.

James, a 5-11 outside hitter who is still recovering from April shoulder surgery, is a different story.

"Her deal is can she get healthy," Cook said. "Right now she's behind. We need her. The sooner we can get the better."

WIN RECORD IN JEOPARDY

Nebraska's victory over Kansas was the Huskers' 78th straight home win. It also cleared the way for the Huskers to break Penn State's NCAA record of 87 straight home wins.

The Huskers are now eight behind the Nittany Lions with seven home matches left in the regular season. If they win all seven of those, they could set the record in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. **N**

2008 VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| Aug. 29-31 | Runza/AVCA Showcase |
| Aug. 29 | *Stanford, W, 3-0 |
| Aug. 31 | *USC, W, 3-1 |
| Sept. 1 | Oral Roberts, W 3-0 |
| Sept. 5-6 | Cal Poly Invite |
| Sept. 5 | Tulane, W, 3-0 |
| Sept. 6 | Cal Poly, W, 3-0 |
| Sept. 12-13 | Ameritas Players Challenge |
| Sept. 12 | LSU, W, 3-0 |
| Sept. 13 | New Mexico, W, 3-0 |
| Sept. 17 | at Kansas State, W, 3-1 |
| Sept. 20 | Texas, W, 3-1 |
| Sept. 24 | Kansas, W, 3-1 |
| Sept. 27 | at Iowa State, 6:30 p.m. |
| Oct. 1 | at Texas Tech, 7 p.m. |
| Oct. 4 | Colorado, 7 p.m. |
| Oct. 5 | *Creighton, 5 p.m. |
| Oct. 8 | Oklahoma, 7 p.m. |
| Oct. 12 | at Missouri, 1 p.m. |
| Oct. 15 | Baylor, 7 p.m. |
| Oct. 22 | Texas A&M, 7 p.m. |
| Oct. 25 | at Oklahoma, 7 p.m. |
| Oct. 29 | at Colorado, 8 p.m. |
| Nov. 1 | Iowa State, 7 p.m. |
| Nov. 5 | at Texas A&M, 6:30 p.m. |
| Nov. 8 | Kansas State, TBA |
| Nov. 12 | Missouri, 7 p.m. |
| Nov. 15 | at Kansas, TBA |
| Nov. 19 | at Texas, 6:30 p.m. |
| Nov. 22 | Texas Tech, 7 p.m. |
| Nov. 29 | at Baylor, 7 p.m. |
| Dec. 5-6 | NCAA 1st/2nd Rounds, TBA |
| Dec. 12-13 | *NCAA Regionals |
| Dec. 18-20 | *NCAA Semifinals, Finals |
| | * at Qwest Center, Omaha |

Men's Basketball

WALTER ROESE

BY BRIAN ROSENTHAL

Talented seniors commit to Huskers

It's not yet certain how many scholarships coach Doc Sadler will have available for his 2009-10 Nebraska men's basketball recruiting class.

That hasn't stopped Sadler from accepting oral commitments weeks before the November early signing period, however. Already, three high school seniors have accepted scholarship offers to Nebraska even though it's possible Sadler will have only two scholarship openings.

The availability of the third scholarship depends on whether Jorge Diaz becomes eligible to enroll in classes for the second semester of the coming season – and, of course, whether Diaz, a 6-11, 220-pound forward from Puerto Rico, honors his oral commitment to Nebraska.

Diaz has not signed a letter of intent but did take an official visit to Lincoln the weekend of the New Mexico State football game. All indications are that if Diaz earns a necessary score on his TOEFL – Test Of English as a Foreign Language – he'll be a Husker come December.

In that event, Sadler will have 11 scholarship players returning for 2009-10, with three players – Rayes Gallegos, Vander Joaquim and Brandon Ubel – planning on signing letters of intent in November.

That's 14 total players. There are 13 scholarships.

It's not the first numbers crunch Sadler has





BRANDON UBEL



VANDER JOAQUIM

faced in his two-plus years at Nebraska, and it probably won't be the last. Sadler has said he'll continue to sign players he believes can and will help Nebraska be competitive in the Big 12 Conference and qualify for NCAA Tournaments.

Of the three oral commitments, it appears Vander Joaquim, a 6-10,

220-pound native of Angola, will have the best chance to make an impact as a freshman.

"I think the sky's the limit for him," said Kelvin Starr, who coached Joaquim last season at Christian High School, a small school near San Diego. "He's long, he's very coordinated, he's good with both hands, he's got great shooting touch, great instincts. He just has to put a little bit more size on him."

Joaquim won't be doing that for Starr, however. Joaquim has transferred to Mountain State Academy, a prep school in Beckley, W. Va., a move intended to give Joaquim stiffer competition on the court.

As a junior, Joaquim averaged 21.2 points and 16.7 rebounds, with game highs of 32 points and 17 rebounds. He shot 57 percent from the field and 71 percent from the free-throw line. He'd originally committed to San Diego but switched allegiances when the coach that recruited him, Walter Roese, left USD and joined Sadler's staff at Nebraska.

"He's just such a loyal, nice kid, he had a hard time telling (San Diego) Coach (Bill) Grier that he didn't want to go there anymore, and he wanted to go to Nebraska," Starr said. "But I think he felt more loyal to Coach Roese."

It was another Nebraska assistant, Phil Mathews, who was responsible for landing the Huskers' latest commitment, Rayes Gallegos. He's a 6-2, 175-pound combo guard from suburban Salt Lake City who impressed Mathews over the summer while playing in AAU tournaments.

Nebraska coaches in July saw Gallegos score 41 and 35 points in games at the Super 64 Tournament in Las Vegas. They kept in touch with him, saw him play again in California, then offered Gallegos, who orally committed Sept. 13.

Gallegos had a scholarship offer from Weber State and interest from Colorado State, Utah State and San Diego.

"I think he's going to be under the radar," said Brad Blanchfield, who coaches Gallegos on the Utah Pump-and-Run White AAU team.

"The kid, he can jump out of the gym. We can run any fast break and finish with a dunk over just about anybody. If the ball's around

the rim, he can go get it. I've seen him come within a couple of inches of the top of the backboard."

Ubel, a 6-9, 220-pound forward from Blue Valley West High School in Overland Park, Kan., also officially visited the weekend of the New Mexico State football game. He orally committed in August, turning down offers from Drake, Illinois State and Utah State.

Ubel's sister, Kayla, is a member of the Nebraska track team. Ubel averaged 20 points and eight rebounds during summer AAU competition.

"I can step out and shoot the three-pointer," Ubel said. "I'm a pretty good shooter. I can take slower guys off the dribble, I can post up smaller guys. Pretty versatile."

HOOPS NOTES

For the first time since 1982, the Nebraska women's basketball team will play in Grand Island. The Huskers will face Nebraska-Kearney in a Nov. 5 exhibition game at the Heartland Events Center. Tip-off is 7:05 p.m.

Coach Connie Yori's women's team, which returns 12 of 13 players from last year's team that advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament, will have a challenging

schedule. The Huskers will face at least 14 teams that qualified for last year's NCAA Tournament.

In a one-month stretch in the non-conference season, Nebraska will face five conference champions from last season. Six of Nebraska's final eight non-conference games could be against teams that played in the NCAA Tournament last season.

Ohio State, Arizona State and Oral Roberts will visit Lincoln, while Nebraska will play at UTEP and at LSU, which has advanced to five straight Final Fours. The Huskers will also play at a tournament in New Mexico, where they could face host New Mexico, the defending Mountain West Conference champion. **N**

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS **HUSKERS** ILLUSTRATED

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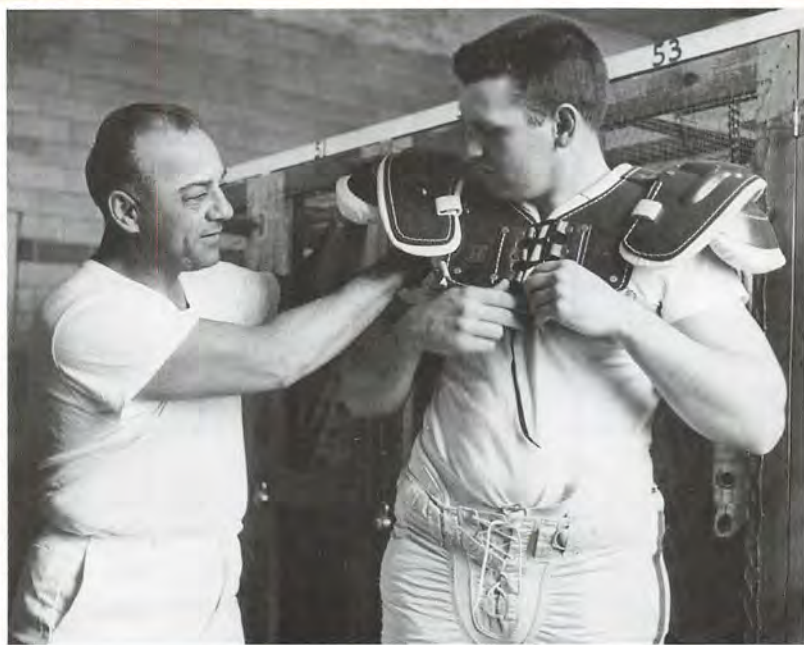
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RIGHT FIT — Paul Schneider fits Bob Oberlin with shoulder pads in the Schulte Fieldhouse locker room in 1953. Oberlin, 6-1 and 200 pounds, was a junior starter, a center and tackle from West Allis, Wis., on coach Bill Glassford's team. Schneider, the Cornhuskers' long-time trainer, was a character, not averse to practical jokes. The idea was his that Frank Solich tape weights inside his sweat clothes in an attempt to be heavier than teammate Larry Wachholtz. When the team reported for pre-season physicals in the fall of 1964, the 5-8 Solich, a junior fullback, was determined not to be the lightest. Schneider, "Schnitz," suggested he tape 5 pounds of weights to his waist for the weigh-in. The weights were covered by Solich's sweatshorts and a large gray T-shirt. With the weights, Solich tipped the scales at 162 pounds. Wachholtz, a sophomore defensive back, weighed in at 163. Dan Jenkins even wrote about the oft-repeated story of the Schneider-conceived weight deception for *Sports Illustrated*.

BOB DEVANEY'S FIRST SEASON

Game 5, Oct. 20, 1962 at Memorial Stadium

Nebraska 26, Kansas State 6

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|----|----|---|---|----|
| Kansas State | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — | 6 |
| Nebraska | 0 | 14 | 12 | 0 | — | 26 |

(KS) Ralph McFillen 86 pass Larry Corrigan (kick failed)
 (N) Dick Callahan 37 pass Dennis Claridge (John Faiman kick)
 (N) Rudy Johnson 6 run (Faiman kick)
 (N) Claridge 4 run (kick failed)
 (N) Noel Martin 3 run (run failed)

Attendance: 30,701



Kansas State came to town with an 0-4 record. The Wildcats had allowed 100 points, exactly. And they had yet to score. But they wasted no time against heavily favored Nebraska. On their first play from scrimmage, quarterback Larry Corrigan and halfback Ralph McFillen teamed on an 86-yard touchdown pass, shocking the nation's fourth-ranked pass defense. On their second play from scrimmage a short time later Corrigan completed another pass, good for 37 yards. Kansas State got to the Nebraska 6-yard line before Corrigan fumbled. The Cornhuskers' Dave Theisen recovered. And that was that. The Wildcats managed only 38 yards rushing. Bob Devaney used 48 players. And Nebraska, despite three pass interceptions, improved to 5-0, its best season's start since 1933.

DEVANEY: "When you know you're supposed to beat a team bad, there is a tendency to want to get things done quick and often it costs you. It's always nice to win, but people always want to know why you didn't win by more."

DID YOU KNOW? The game was the last non-sellout at Memorial Stadium. The day before, Frank Solich scored two touchdowns, the first on a 52-yard run, as coach John Melton's Cornhusker freshmen defeated the Kansas State freshmen 31-0.

TOM OSBORNE'S FIRST SEASON

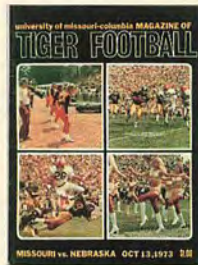
Game 5, Oct. 13, 1973 at Columbia, Mo.

Missouri 13, Nebraska 12

| | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Nebraska | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 | — | 12 |
| Missouri | 0 | 6 | 0 | 7 | — | 13 |

(N) Rich Sanger 42 field goal
 (N) Sanger 29 field goal
 (M) Greg Hill 35 field goal
 (M) Hill 31 field goal
 (M) Tom Mulkey 1 run (Hill kick)
 (N) Ritche Bahe 22 pass Dave Humm (pass failed)

Attendance: 68,720



Tom Osborne's decision to go for two and the victory instead of settling for a tie in the 1984 Orange Bowl game against Miami was a defining moment in his coaching career. That play-to-win attitude was evident from the beginning, in his first loss as head coach. After No. 12 Missouri capitalized on Randy Borg's bobbled punt to score with 2:03 remaining, the No. 2 Cornhuskers responded, quickly covering 72 yards on three Dave Humm passes to make the score 13-12 with 1:00 left. Instead of sending in Rich Sanger to kick the extra point, Osborne called for a two-point conversion pass, which was deflected and intercepted. The Cornhuskers held a dramatic statistical edge, 444 total yards to 170, including 297 passing to Missouri's 7. Borg's fumble wasn't Nebraska's only costly mistake, and the senior cornerback intercepted two passes to thwart two first-half Missouri drives.

OSBORNE: "We came down here to win. There was never any thought of going for the tie. If there had been 3 or 4 minutes left, we might have, hoping to get the ball again. But that late, we had to go for broke."

DID YOU KNOW? The day before the game president Richard Nixon nominated Omaha-born Gerald Ford as vice president. Three days before, facing criminal charges, Spiro Agnew resigned as vice president. Ford would become president after Nixon resigned on Aug. 9, 1974.

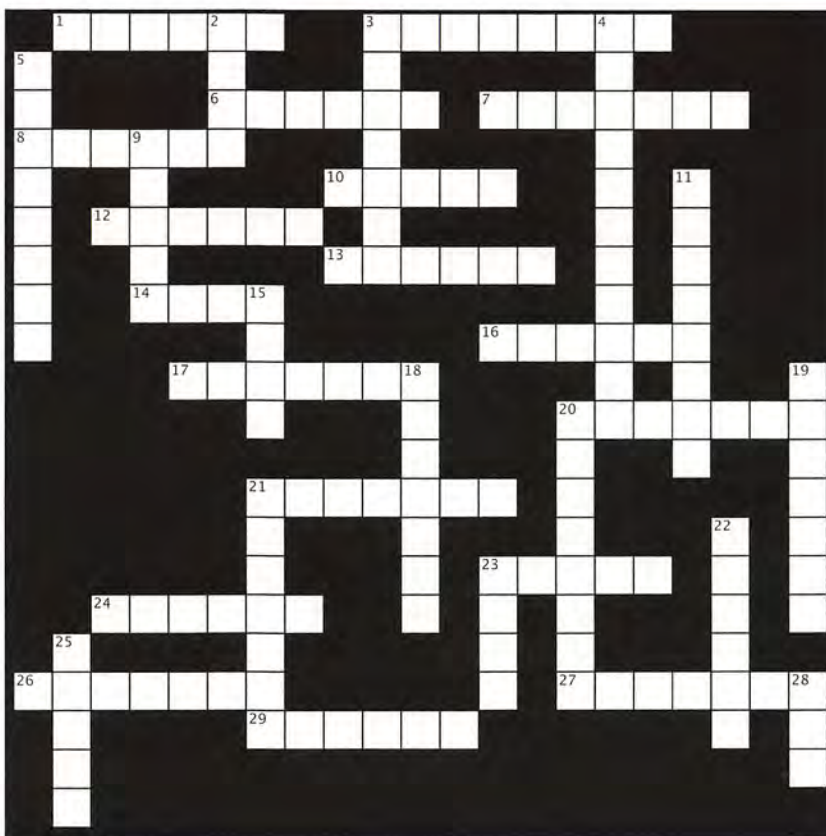
CROSSWORD & TRIVIA

ACROSS

1. Missouri head coach
3. Defensive end who played for first time vs. New Mexico State
6. Former Missouri head coach who played at NU
7. Kicker from Texas
8. Wears No. 36
10. Wears No. 34
12. Missouri's nickname
13. Blocked field goal vs. New Mexico State
14. Leading tackler vs. New Mexico State
16. Linebackers coach
17. Ex-Husker and San Diego defensive lineman
20. Ex-Husker and Philadelphia linebacker
21. 1994 Outland Trophy winner
23. 2002 All-America kick returner
24. Bo Pelini's college position
26. Turner Gill's current school
27. Secondary coach
29. Missouri receiver, kick returner

DOWN

2. Network for NU-Missouri telecast
 3. Had interception vs. New Mexico State
 4. Walk-on tight end awarded scholarship this fall
 5. Missouri campus location
 9. Former Missouri head coach
 11. Pierre Allen's home state
 15. Caught touchdown pass vs. New Mexico State
 18. Wears No. 44
 19. Dan Titchener's home state
 20. 2003 All-America defensive back
 21. 1997 Lombardi Award winner
 22. Missouri quarterback
 23. Missouri school color
 25. Leading rusher vs. New Mexico State
 28. Had 2 sacks vs. New Mexico State
- Answers will appear in Oct. 11 issue



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SEPTEMBER 27 CROSSWORD SOLUTION





THE FINAL WORD

BY MIKE BABCOCK

Mistakes can be corrected, attitude can't

FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES only, Nebraska was favored by a touchdown or so against Virginia Tech. Quarterback Tyrod Taylor even used the term "underdogs" to refer to the Hokies.

Recent history doesn't support such a characterization, however. Virginia Tech has finished in the nation's Top 20 in 12 of the last 15 seasons, including five times in the Top 10. The Hokies have played in 15 consecutive bowl games. And they are among only three teams to have won at least 10 games in each of the last four seasons. The others are USC and Texas. Nebraska's record the past four seasons was 27-22, Virginia Tech's 42-11.

So which has been the more prominent program of late?

The relative strength of the two has been reversed since they played each other in the 1996 Orange Bowl game. Cornhusker fans should consider such things in evaluating Virginia Tech's 35-30 victory in what the media characterized throughout the week as a "statement" game.

That was a recurrent theme in questioning at Nebraska's weekly news conference on the Tuesday beforehand. Quarterback Joe Ganz was asked if the game would be a measuring stick.

"I think we're anxious to see how good we actually are," he said.

He was answering a question, remember, not making a statement.

Nebraska's "statement game" last season was against USC. And the statement, in the form of a 49-31 loss that wasn't nearly so close, was not the one the Cornhuskers had hoped to make. A week later, they nearly lost to Ball

State and, well, you know the rest of the story.

This season, Nebraska's post-statement-game opponent is considerably more formidable than Ball State. Missouri is considerably more formidable than Virginia Tech, for that matter.

Given this week's upsets, the Tigers could be ranked in the top three. And the week after they come to Memorial Stadium, Nebraska has to travel to Texas Tech, another Top 10 team.

But if the Virginia Tech game is any indication – and it would seem to be – the Cornhuskers won't fall apart the way they did last season. They might not win. But they'll scrap.

"With this team and with what Coach (Bo) Pelini preaches to us, this team will never quit," said linebacker Cody Glenn. "Even if it's 40-0, we're going to play until it's done, until there's triple-zeros on the clock. We're never going to stop. We played hard in all three phases of the game.

"But playing hard's not always going to get you a win."

Pelini said the same thing in evaluating his team's disappointing performance. "We made way too many mistakes. It wasn't effort. It wasn't attitude. We got out-executed," he said.

The mistakes reflected a lack of consistency that has been apparent from time to time in the Cornhuskers' preparation. In fact, Pelini had been unhappy with practice on the Wednesday before the game.

It might have seemed a motivational ploy. But, as it turns out, it wasn't.

"We didn't practice well enough on

Wednesday to win," he said. "We've been very inconsistent. It's more of an execution thing. We've got to coach it better. And we've got to play better."

He repeated "mistakes" and "execution" throughout the 8-plus minutes of his post-game news conference. "It's not about emotion. It's about execution," he said.

"It's about fundamentals and doing your job. We didn't do that. We had too many breakdowns. And you're not going to beat a good football team doing that."

Make no mistake, Virginia Tech is a very good football team.

You're also not going to beat a team like Virginia Tech without maintaining your composure and without running more effectively – 25 rushes for 55 yards. It wasn't going to be easy, with defensive coordinator Bud Foster loading the "box" against the run. But Nebraska needed to meet that challenge and didn't.

Pelini had no immediate explanation for the anemic running game. "I thought we had some holes early," he said. "I don't know. I'll have to look at the (video) tape on that."

Mistakes can be corrected. Attitude can't.

Cornhusker fans should be encouraged, even though the opposition gets tougher the next two weeks. There are no certain victories in conference play, in fact. Every game will be a battle.

Pelini's team showed against Virginia Tech that it will battle, however. A year ago, the Cornhuskers would have been finished when the score reached 28-10. Not so now.

"We're going to continue to play hard," Glenn said. "That's kind of our motto.

"We play hard and physical every game." **N**

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